FEMALE MIGRANTS:

Bridging the Gaps Throughout the Life Cycle

Selected Papers of the UNFPA-IOM Expert Group Meeting

New York, 2-3 May 2006

UNFPA

IOM International Organization for Migration

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NOTES:

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the participants who attended the *Expert Group Meeting on Female Migrants: Bridging the gaps throughout the life cycle* and do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The papers included in this report have been published as submitted.

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United Nations Population Fund
220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

www.unfpa.org

International Organization for Migration
17, Route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 19 Switzerland
Tel: +41.22.717 9111 • Fax: +41.22.798 6150
122 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10168-1610
www.iom.int

FOREWORD

Over the past 40 years, as migration trends have grown increasingly complex, the number of female migrants has also steadily risen. Female migrants now constitute nearly half of all migrants worldwide with an overwhelming majority migrating to developed countries. There is therefore now more than ever before a need for documenting and collecting data related to female migrants' experiences from a life cycle perspective, from the time they decide to leave to the time they come back to their country of origin. Recognizing this need, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) jointly organized a two-day expert group meeting on female migrants on 2-3 May 2006 in New York.

Migration data is largely not gender-specific and female migrants seem invisible in international migration statistics. This absence of gender-specific data hinders the understanding and appropriate assessment of women's role and needs in the migration process. It is essential to understand the characteristics and realities of female migration – its causes, differentiation and gender-specific issues, including the separation of families and the particular vulnerabilities of trafficking and violence.

Though female migration may still largely occur due to family reunification and, in some cases, forced migration, more women today are migrating independently to meet their own economic demands. Thus, female migration may potentially be an element of gender equality and an element for modifying gender roles and women's status. Female migrants face different challenges and opportunities than men as they integrate into their host communities and become development agents for both their countries of destination and origin. And for those female migrants who return to their country of origin after several years, empowered and with new perspectives, they may face new social challenges as they have to adjust to their societies and families but can also contribute to the development of their place of origin with their new skills and economic and decision-making power acquired during migration. Further research on female migration – at all stages of the life cycle - is necessary to understand its challenges and opportunities and to ensure the inclusion into the different agendas.

This report includes the different perspectives of experts on female migration from countries of origin, transit and destination from all five continents, as well as representatives from international agencies, NGOs and diaspora organizations. This two-day expert group meeting also produced a set of conclusions and recommendations for all stakeholders to be conveyed to the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the General Assembly in September 2006. We hope that this publication can complement the discussions leading up to the High-Level Dialogue and place the female migrants' perspective on the international migration agenda.

Mari Simonen
Deputy Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund

Ndioro Ndiaye
Deputy Director General
International Organization for Migration

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1. SUMMARY OF THE UNFPA-IOM EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON FEMALE MIGRANTS

New York, 2-3 May 2006

Introduction

Women make up nearly half of all migrants, an estimated 95 million of 191 million people living outside their countries of origin in 2005.[1] Having said this, after many years of observing migration and collecting data there is remarkably little reliable information about women as migrants. This anomaly underlines their continuing invisibility to policymakers and development planners. The High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development by the General Assembly on 14-15 September 2006 offers the best opportunity in a generation to address the rights, needs, capabilities and contribution of women migrants.

Equal numbers do not confer equality of treatment. Women have fewer opportunities than men for legal migration; many women become irregular migrants with concomitant lack of support and exposure to risk. Whether they migrate legally or not, alone or as members of a family unit, women are more vulnerable than men to violence and exploitation. Their needs for health care, including reproductive health care, and other services are less likely to be met. They have more limited opportunities than men for social integration and political participation.

Migration can be beneficial, both for women and for the countries which send and receive them. Women migrants make a significant economic contribution through their labour, both to their countries of destination and, through remittances, to their countries of origin.

In societies where women's power to move autonomously is limited, the act of migration is in itself empowering. It stimulates change in women migrants themselves, and in the societies which send and receive them. In the process women's migration can become a force for removing existing gender imbalances and inequities, and for changing underlying conditions so that new imbalances and inequities do not arise. Women's voluntary migration is a powerful force for positive change in countries both of origin and of destination.

Beyond their economic contribution, women migrants are a main source of physical and emotional support for older and younger family members. As such, women have additional responsibilities, whether they migrate with their families or leave them behind, and additional stress that can strain the fabric of their lives. The cost to their families and communities may not be completely quantifiable, but it is none the less real.

The benefits of women's migration to development carry other countervailing costs. These include the loss of qualified and professional women in the countries of origin – "brain drain" and the failure on the part of countries of destination to recognise or allow women to use their qualifications – or "brain waste". National policies and international agreements should begin to address these issues in a systematic way.

[1] Hania Zlotnik, paper for UNFPA-IOM meeting "Female migrants: bridging the gaps throughout the life cycle".2-3 May 2006

Forced movement accounts for an unknown but significant number of women migrants. Trafficking for sexual purposes is second only to drugs in its economic value to organized crime. Although illegal, customary usage may sanction or ignore the abduction or sale of children and young women for labour, sexual exploitation or marriage. Attacks on women and their dependants, torture, rape and murder are used as strategies in civil and cross-border conflicts to dislodge communities and destabilize societies. Natural disaster or cumulative environmental degradation forces the migration of many women and their families.

Insufficient attention to female migration in its different aspects violates the human rights of the people concerned, holds back development and reduces the possibilities for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Standards for protecting women migrant workers' rights are found in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and General Assembly Resolution 58/143 on Violence against Women Migrant Workers.

Among other international instruments of importance to women migrants is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime. Also of relevance are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights.

A number of protection mechanisms deriving from the UN Charter are relevant to promoting the rights of migrant women. One such mechanism is the Special Rapporteur. The Commission on Human Rights and ECOSOC have each appointed Special Rapporteurs; but most relevant to migrant women are the Special Rapporteurs on Violence against Women; on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children; and on the Human Rights of Migrants.

The UNFPA-IOM Expert Group Meeting

To discuss these issues, UNFPA and IOM organized an expert group meeting on 2-3 May 2006 entitled "Female migrants: bridging the gaps throughout the life cycle". The meeting brought together over 50 independent experts from countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as representatives from governments, international agencies, NGOs, and diaspora organizations. The aim was to formulate a set of recommendations for action by governments, international organisations and civil society, as a contribution to the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to mainstream female migrants' needs and rights into the agenda.

Despite its considerable implications, both at the national level and in the continuing international discussion on social and economic development, all participants agreed that women's migration had received too little attention. In part this is the result of the absence of sex-disaggregated data and therefore of systematic awareness of the phenomenon; but it also indicates a lack of political will to act. Many countries collect sex-disaggregated data but few process and use it as a basis for policy, or even publish it in a form that can readily be analysed. Most countries lack the capacity for analysis from a gender perspective.

Researchers first noted the phenomenon of female migration for employment, or the "feminization of migration", over 30 years ago. Until recently governments and international fora have done very little to address it in any systematic way, nor to address the issues raised by female migration as part of family units and by forced migration. Where they exist, policies towards female migration are either an extension of migration policies in general, ignoring gender-specific concerns, or else address limited aspects of each issue as it arises in isolation from the broader picture. The Millennium Development Goals have focused attention on the integrated nature of development and on women's central part in it. Female migration takes its place among the many gender-related issues now claiming policymakers' urgent attention.

The meeting concluded the following:

- Women should have the choice to migrate or to stay in their countries of origin, unconstrained by government policies or economic necessity.
- Migration is on balance a positive experience for the individuals concerned, and for both countries of origin and destination.
- Female migration raises serious issues of human rights, family and community cohesion, social inclusion, national development priorities and international co-operation, and these issues include both brain drain and brain waste.
- Better information and the capacity to analyse it from a gender perspective are both needed.
- Policies on female migration should be integrated with overall development policies so as to maximise the capabilities and contributions of women.
- Authorities should consider the need for new legal protections for female migrants.
- Existing laws and international agreements should be vigorously enforced.
- Governments should address these issues in co-operation with each other, within their own national ministries and with civil society and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) at national and international levels.
- IOM and UNFPA should establish a task force to define collaboration at the policy and programmatic levels on the topic of female migration.

Recommendations

The independent experts were invited to provide a number of recommendations. While some of the recommendations include ideas to which countries are already giving attention, others propose innovations in policy and practice.

Life Cycle 1: Before women migrate

The aim of policy should be to enable and support women's decisions regarding migration. Blanket bans on female migration are inappropriate and ineffective, whether they are intended to stem the drain of university graduates and women from key occupations or to enforce traditional barriers on women's mobility. On the other hand, women should not be forced by family pressure to migrate in order to become a source of remittances from abroad.

Stemming the brain drain

- Governments should work at national and international levels to create an economic environment which will encourage qualified women to consider alternatives to migration through:
  - promoting employment opportunities, with adequate salaries and professional development, for qualified women in their countries of origin;
  - establishing exchange programmes for expatriates to train women in their areas of expertise in countries of origin, and promote networking among professionals at home and abroad.

Protections for women migrants

- Governments should establish formal, systematic protection plans for nationals intending to live and work overseas.
- Pre-departure programmes (in co-operation with migrant organizations in destination countries) should provide information and training for women considering migration on:
  - conditions in the intended countries of destination, including deficiencies and drawbacks such as marginalization of migrant populations, unequal treatment for women, or heightened risks of violence or trafficking in-country or en route; countries should consider travel bans in extreme cases;
  - legal migration routes and the implications of irregular migration;
  - human rights entitlements, including rights to basic services;
  - where to find assistance in countries of transit and destination, including consular support, local migrant organizations and destination-country NGOs;
  - protecting health, including reproductive health;
  - job opportunities in countries of destination;
  - destination-country languages;
  - optimising remittances while abroad and on return.

- Governments should also regulate and monitor private recruiting agencies to ensure human rights protection, legality, safety and complete information for intending migrants, including basic training in the language of the country of destination.

Life Cycle 2: As women migrate

Countries of transit are somewhat overlooked with respect to female migration, but migrants in transit, particularly female migrants, are at their most vulnerable. Countries of transit should:

- Respond to the need for basic human rights protection with training for border police, security, and general administration.
- Train government institutions and policymakers on understanding what it means to be a migrant in transit.
- Engage in regional consultations to discuss issues concerning female migration.
- Provide the same basic social services as countries of origin and destination, and permit networks of government, international organizations and civil society to provide temporary food, shelter and health care.
- Provide information on emergency assistance and organizations which can offer assistance.
- Cooperate with countries of origin to ensure consular services in transit countries to assist migrants.

Remittances

Policies towards female migration should recognize that remittances contribute to social development and poverty reduction, but that they are not the main tool to alleviate poverty and that there are countervailing economic and social costs.

- Governments should provide financial literacy training for women sending or receiving remittances, and support the flow of remittances to programmes in favour of women.
- Governments should provide an enabling environment for migrants to make investments. These might include tax breaks; development bonds; mortgages, support to credit unions or hometown associations; financial support and capacity building to allow female migrants to pool resources; ICTs for communication and transmitting remittances; research on new models of transmitting remittances and advice on options.
- Governments should support the means for migrants to protect their lives and earnings, including innovative means of cross-border insurance.
- Governments should study and disseminate best practices in all these areas.

Women as migrants; risks and opportunities

Women migrants face a dual challenge. The act of migration is a challenge in itself: but for women it also breaks with established and gender-biased values and practices, both in their countries of origin and in their countries of destination.

To ease their integration, women migrants need recognition and support. Their first challenge is to overcome the language barrier: the second is to win acceptance in their country of destination. Countries of destination should help create an enabling environment for women migrants, encouraging host communities to accept women migrants as contributing members of society. They should ensure a legal framework to protect migrants' human rights, with enforcement as required, and train government workers and service providers to act in the spirit of the law. They should co-operate with countries of origin and support diaspora organizations in this work.

Countries of origin should:

- Support embassies and consular services in destination countries to assist migrants.
- Promote cooperation with the diaspora.
- Set up networks of international agencies, migrant organizations, NGOs and grassroots organizations to provide support systems.

Countries of destination should:

Labour markets

- Assist sending countries to strengthen consular protection, or provide support through IGOs.
- Provide protection from fraud and misappropriation for women who send remittances.
- Provide language training with assistance from international organizations.
- Provide access for migrant workers to the same services and protections as national workers, including health and job safety.
- Encourage dialogue among government, host and migrant organizations.
- Sensitize policymakers and adapt policies to accommodate female migrants.
- Study host countries' demographic patterns and migrants' effect on labour supply and pension systems.
- Assess labour markets in the sending country and the host country, and reach bilateral agreements on migration policies.
- Respect and enforce labour laws, conventions and treaties on female migration.
- Recognize domestic work as formal employment, with the same conditions of work and protections as other workers.
- Work with countries of origin to recognize women migrants' qualifications so that they can practise their skills in their countries of destination.
- Recognize the competences of undocumented as well as documented migrants.

Human Rights

- Legislate to protect the human rights of female migrants, with vigorous enforcement;

- End tolerance of violations of migrants' human rights.
- Assist integration of female migrants by raising awareness among host country populations.
- Strengthen diaspora organizations to assist female migrants.
- Open channels for migrants to regularise their status.
- Register births of migrants' children.
- Strengthen law enforcement for prevention of trafficking.
- Provide training and public information to estimate the extent of trafficking and recognise victims.
- Aid trafficked and smuggled migrants.

Gender-based violence

- Combat sexual violence and abuse against migrants.
- Regularise women's migration and employment to reduce the risk of women being forced into sex work.

Health and social services

- Provide access to reproductive and other health services tailored to the specific needs of female migrants; policy changes at the national level are necessary to integrate women migrants and involve them in designing health programmes so that they can use the host society's services effectively.
- Document best practices on reproductive health services for female migrants both in times of peace and in emergency situations.
- Train established migrants as mediators between migrants and social and health workers to assist migrants in obtaining better access to services and information.
- Strengthen civil society to accommodate female migrants' needs, such as education.
- Strengthen Ministries of Women's Affairs for protection of female migrants.

Impact on families/communities left behind

- Long-term migration is very destructive for families unless reunification is permitted. Particular attention is needed to the education of children left behind, including girl children, and to arrangements for care of the elderly.

Life Cycle 3: After women return to their countries of origin

For female migrants, return may not be a simple matter of "coming home". Some long-term female migrants may feel as though they belong to more than one society. Others were unwilling migrants, victims of trafficking or abduction, who face stigma and rejection on their return. Returned women migrants have much to offer: their countries and communities should be ready to support them.

On return, countries should:

- Recognise women migrants as agents of development by supporting enterprise creation and providing access to services and information.

- Recognize the social impact of circular migration with increasing mobility.
- Offer psychosocial rehabilitation and combat stigma against returned victims of trafficking and abuse.

Dynamics at every stage of the life cycle

All countries should:

- Establish policy frameworks to discourage illegal migration, punish traffickers, and provide safety and stability to the process of migration.
- Adhere to international conventions and agreements.
- Promote free flow of labour as the counterpart of goods and services.
- Consider bilateral agreements whereby receiving countries would invest in development projects for returned migrants in their countries of origin.
- Invest in skills development of female migrants.
- Agree on portability of social security benefits.

Partnerships

Ultimately, all countries must recognise the need for a global approach involving all stakeholders. Countries should work together, and with IGOs and civil society.

- Responsibility for capacity building, integration, and reintegration, action against female trafficking and the protection and care of victims are shared between sending and receiving countries.
- Co-operation and dialogue, and regional dialogue in particular, are necessary among all countries involved in migration flows.
- Co-operation among embassies and consular services in countries of origin, transit and destination are vital to protect the human rights of female migrants.
- The gender dimension should be mainstreamed in the migration dialogue, and in national, regional and international policies and programmes.
- All countries should observe the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action and ICPD Chapter X in respect of female migrants.

Filling data gaps

The lack of sex-disaggregated data, and the failure to use, analyse or even publish existing data in a usable form, inhibit coherent policymaking and action in favour of women migrants. Countries and international organizations should encourage:

- research on international standards, follow-up systems and impact of female migration;
- collection and analysis of data on migration typologies; research on differences among countries of destination; research on different categories of migrants such as

refugees, professionals, workers, poor and dependent women; and research on the impact of migration on gender-related issues;

- research on the social impacts of migration in countries of origin, in particular the impact on children, on women left behind and the elderly;
- research and documentation on the impact of female migration on both sending and receiving countries.

In addition to gender-segregated data, gender-based analysis is needed. There is no systematic analysis of female migration – its causes, differentiation from male migration, and gender-specific issues. A gender-based analysis on the push and pull factors of female migration might aid in formulating effective gender-sensitive migration policies.

2. INTRODUCTION TO FEMALE MIGRATION DYNAMICS

OVERVIEW:
SITUATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF MIGRANT WOMEN

Ndioro Ndiaye
Deputy Director General
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The paper will briefly review some of the factors, both negative and positive, that constitute the female migration experience. It is necessary to draw attention to the countless contributions made by migrant women, and to the importance of recognising and giving them their due value. In order to do this, special attention must be given to the good practices that will be raised later in this presentation to help us reflect on ways and means of improving the situation of migrant women.

Overview of the status of migrant women

Women have been and continue to be full actors in international migration. The last few decades, however, have seen a great increase in migrant women around the world. International migration is characterized by rapidly increasing feminization. On a global scale, the number of women who migrate today is equal to that of men, and in certain regions is even higher.

Women today tend to migrate more independently rather than for family reunification reasons or as dependants of male migrants. With these new migration patterns, new problems, and consequently new solutions, have emerged.

The volume of international migration is practically equal for both men and women. In 2000, women amounted to approximately 49 per cent of the total number of migrants in the world. More precisely, migrating women and girls were slightly more numerous than men in developed countries. In developing countries, however, they totalled slightly less than 45 per cent of all migrants. On a regional level, migrant women numerically outnumbered men in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Oceania, while in Africa and in Asia they were generally under-represented when compared to men.[1]

The relatively new economic and social changes often described as "globalisation" are not without impact in terms of gender. These changes and their effects act and interact on a global level, transcending traditional notions of time and space. It is not proposed to dwell on these important aspects of international migration. We can nonetheless affirm that there are decisive factors that impact differently on migrants depending on whether they are men or women: in the labour market, in unfavourable legislation, economic deregulation, supply and demand and in conflicts – to mention but a few in a long list.

As these ongoing changes have increased female migration and made it more visible, we can ask what are the advantages and disadvantages of female migration to countries and the migrants themselves? Under what conditions are the lives of

different actors played out? How can we encourage initiatives introduced by these women to improve their lives? And above all, in which way can these women become effective actors in economic and social development?

With reference to the latter, Christine Verschuur[2] feels that a gendered outlook on contemporary migration can:

- give prominence to the contribution of women in the new international division of labour;
- give prominence to women among migrants;
- give prominence to the financial contribution of female migrant workers in their country of origin;
- underscore the economic and social discrimination against migrant women;
- challenge preconceived ideas about the causes, effects and dangers of migration, to demonstrate the diversity of the phenomenon in terms of resources and alternatives for development, but also in terms of abuse and hypocrisies.[3]

At this point, it becomes necessary to take stock of both the negative and positive reality of female migration to promote the dynamic initiatives deriving from it.

Female migration has assumed an ever more important place over these last years in different actions and programmes. Nonetheless, the picture is heterogeneous with few general characteristics, particularly regarding long-term causes and effects. But it is indispensable to emphasise the positive aspects of migration and the important contribution of migrant women on an international scale. The meeting will describe the situation of these women, as well the dynamics that stigmatize their lives, and to make concrete proposals for improvement.

Many efforts have been made to integrate the word "woman" and the gender dimension into studies on migration. This dimension is as crosscutting and multidimensional as migration itself. Gender is indispensable to understanding not only the situation of migrant women and men but also the functions attributed to men and to women according to the hierarchy of gender.

Indeed, is it not the life experiences of these women that interest us here, experiences that become progressively and tangibly much more visible? What also becomes more visible is the role they play within their families and in their countries of origin, as well as in their host countries. How can we promote mechanisms to make migrant women fully-fledged actors in their migration experience? How can their involvement be optimised, especially within the labour context, on the one hand, to encourage their integration in and contribution to the host country and, on the other, their contribution to the wellbeing of their country of origin? This issue not only must be addressed as it concerns family life but also that its analysis must encourage migrant women to become sources of change, decision and progress.

Some thoughts on improving the situation of migrant women and maximizing their contributions

How can migrant women themselves profit from the migration process? How can we reinforce the interests of migrant women and improve their situation at all levels? How can access to information, influence on institutions, communication of experiences, or even simply their visibility, be maximized, in particular by insisting on the influence of gender factors and the role they can play?

Giving prominence to and promoting migrant women

For example, it is absolutely necessary to highlight the contributions of migrant women to the development of countries and reinforce their position as workers and creators of economic resources.[4] We know that migrant women find themselves in certain employment sectors which unfortunately rely solely on female workers: jobs as "care-givers" in the widest sense, such as domestic service; care of the elderly, the sick and children; jobs requiring patience, an eye for detail and repetition; and sexual work including prostitution and pornography. These are also the sectors where one can find the worst pay, irregular situations, marginalisation and a lack of social protection. A large concentration of migrant women is therefore found in a limited number of occupations with precarious working conditions. What can be done?

It is imperative to give special attention to migrant women since we note that the role of migrant women is underestimated in economic development and general wellbeing, where they are often considered as economically inactive dependants.[5] They must be recognized and the importance of their contributions at all levels promoted, of; and attention must be drawn to their situation, which is special, manifold and diverse. Qualified migration "…is also important to be given prominence in this migration category and attention must be paid to their situation and different needs as compared with those of men."[6] Visibility must be considered a fundamental objective. We need to underscore not only this visibility but also its diversity. The latter represents a profitable contribution, enriching and constructive, and also an egalitarian one.

In other respects, it is important to change a certain negative perception of migrant women and to promote awareness of their special *savoir-faire* and often exceptional dynamism: "In the case of women in particular, the mere fact of emigrating to another country indicates a dynamism and a will to assume risks and challenges. Many migrant women are at the *avant garde* of change, especially once they return to their country of origin. They give the example of courage and determination to realize and attain their own objectives and projects."[7]

Empowerment

To achieve this, it is more than desirable to implement policies and actions that reinforce the independence of migrant women and of their organizations.[8] In other words, we need to reflect on policies that would reinforce the situation of migrant women.

According to various definitions, empowerment applied to migrant women

> …aims at increasing their capacities and their independence. The creation of organizations for and by migrant women is a good practice presenting different advantages. Meeting other migrants can break social isolation and offer the possibility of collectively analyzing their situation, defining their needs and finding adequate solutions. The realisation that certain violations of their rights are not based on "personal inadequacy" but rather on social exclusion mechanisms and discrimination, can increase their self-esteem and their capacity to formulate proposals and viable solutions.[9]

This is an interesting issue: it is from socially gendered mechanisms that the different situations arise which migrants have to confront. The various forms of exclusion and discrimination they have to bear are the fruit of their condition as women: in other words, migrant women are foreigners in a hierarchical environment. This aspect should not be minimized.

The principles of empowerment lead us to reflect on the role of these women. Indeed, the participation of women at all levels must promote the idea that they should be actors in programmes, not just passive beneficiaries.

Another point that should be considered is that of the expertise women acquire during their migration experience. On the one hand, as mentioned earlier, women who have acquired independence and thereby enjoy a noteworthy status are an encouraging model not only for future generations but also in those sectors having key importance for development such as health and education, child protection and local environment.

On the other hand, these women, particularly professional migrant women, often wish to contribute to the development of their country of origin by associating themselves, for instance, as investors with local partners to create jobs and stimulate all types of initiatives and projects whose value is or would be priceless. More precisely, these women not only ask to contribute to the economic and social development of the receiving country as well as the country of origin, but also frequently aspire to optimise and multiply their skills.

Furthermore, we should not forget the considerable importance of remittances by migrants to their countries of origin. Not only are women more reliable and regular in their remittances, but the amounts of these transfers of capital are significant. It would be wise to examine means of channelling financial contributions produced by these diasporas to development projects in their countries of origin.

These last two phenomena – the transfer of expertise of migrant women and that of financial, social and human contributions by female diasporas to their country of origin – are new and they require special attention.

Recommendations

One of the solutions is community action aimed at strengthening and cooperating with migrant women according to the principles of empowerment. The importance of

women's organizations in self-managed networks should also be underlined as a solution to improving the disadvantaged situation often tied to non-citizenship.

Collaboration among official entities, states, international organizations, NGOs and associations of different migrant communities could be highly constructive. These actions should include training in women's rights, community participation, prevention of violence and insertion into professions, promotion of cultural activities such as meetings and workshops, information and counselling on such matters as rights, health, education, discrimination, violence and legalization of status.[10]

In the same vein, it is imperative to obtain data on associations, social networks, initiatives and programmes by and for migrants. The influence of these initiatives on the positive integration of migrant women in the host countries is also to be determined. It is suggested here that we adopt an objective to identify the convergences, divergences and interactions of our different approaches in this field. Furthermore, in our attempt to examine these issues positively, it is essential that we address and then integrate the initiatives and experiences of the migrant women themselves.

A great number of migrant women, having lived for some time in a host country, are often quite determined to continue living there. These women do not dream of going back home except to visit, and so they have begun to form small groups with other women – either migrants such as themselves or fellow countrywomen – to improve their lives. They participate and interact with their environment in differing degrees, for example by going back to school; attending public or political events; creating and leading all sorts of initiatives, and often demonstrating solidarity in situations of domestic or social violence.

Individual migrants' participation in community or political life (if the latter is at all possible) often transforms the women concerned into "reference points". They are always considered "different" because they have established contacts for different *démarches* with civil society institutions and with states. This is the case in many regions of the world: we can think of women from Latin America who migrated to North or South America; Filipina women who organize themselves almost everywhere, or certain groups of African migrants, for example from the Great Lakes region, working for their interests as migrants but also for the reconstruction of their countries of origin.

Of these women, some have become models themselves, to the extent that their economic, social or political contributions have resulted in their becoming real leaders. This point should be emphasized: it is essential that we integrate our approaches and encourage the contributions of these women in matters of governance, participation in decision-making and exercise of power, whether in the country of origin or in the receiving country. We must innovate and promote female leadership in migrant diasporas by facilitating their involvement in the development process not only in their host communities but also in their countries of origin.

The High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development is the very first high-level event of the United Nations entirely devoted to migration and development, offering

States the unique opportunity not only to exchange best practices in migration management among themselves but also to promote cooperation in key migration fields. The Dialogue will take place in September 2006.

IOM has identified some key issues for debate. They are:

Migration and development: this dialogue can assist in drawing particular attention to the sharing of effective practices in the field of migration and development; to mainstream migration in the Millennium Development Goals and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers; to promoting the use of migration and development indicators; reinforcing the economic role of the diaspora and the development potential of remittances. The aspects raised earlier in this context are unequivocal and the migrant woman has a unique role to play in them.

Labour migration: during this dialogue, states can work to develop a more effective global labour market, as an investment in human beings; protect and support labour migrants; improve the security of remittance transfers while lowering their costs; analyse the role of circular migration. Here, women are active in social change linked to the improved well-being of their families.

Human rights of migrants: we should work to improve the understanding and implementation of existing legal instruments; promote integration and combat xenophobia and racism. With regard to migrant women, integrating gender analysis is a must, particularly within human rights issues to fight multiple discrimination, by race or ethnicity, class and gender.

International migration law: we should take advantage of the political momentum offered by the High-level Dialogue to increase awareness and effective implementation of existing international legal instruments, and provide capacity building to countries in need of technical cooperation to implement them.

Managing migration: we should also work to improve coherence in government migration policymaking; foster dialogue between sending and receiving countries; support regional consultative processes, and strengthen coherence and coordination among agencies, for example the Geneva Migration Group. Here is where migrant women can find a place and play a strong role.

Conclusion

First of all, it is important to stress the need for action in favour of migrant women, and for the availability of precise data, especially sex-disaggregated. By this, it means not only statistics but also even more the need for qualitative research. Such detailed data would provide the possibility of developing actions and programmes with a gender dimension and associated diverse facets in the migration equation. This is a fundamental step that would also provide an opportunity for a more human and positive dimension in research.

In the same vein, it has become urgent today to collaborate in a joint endeavour: the long-term objective should be not only to obtain a clear picture but also to develop a reference tool on migrant women and their experiences. This would constitute a real challenge and could perhaps make up for the lack of more detailed information in the field. How can we aspire to such an objective and long-term challenge while hoping to be exhaustive?

As suggested earlier, several actions could be envisaged with the aim of improving, giving prominence to and raising awareness of women's mobility and experience. It can be existing media or artistic initiatives; awareness-raising or field activities; guides to assist with departure or arrival, and also "…initiatives and actions in the host countries, devoted to organizing women, informing them of their rights and offering various types of training".[11] It would be interesting to gather information and give prominence to studies or publications on the often exceptionally efficient and mobilizing economic and social role played by migrant women.

Let us not forget, the challenge now is to prove that these women can indeed be more active, make decisions, thwart age-old values and become agents of change. These are the changes on which all men and women must build.[12]

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[1] World Migration 2005, IOM, p. 381.
[2] Verschuur, Christine, "Un regard genré sur les migrations", in *Femmes en mouvement, Genre, migrations, et nouvelle division internationale du travail,* Collection Yvonne Preiswerk, DDC/UNESCO, IUED, 2004.
[3] Verschuur, Christine, ibid, pp15-16.
[4] Daeren, Lieve, "Género en la migración laboral internacional en América latina y el Caribe, Pautas para 'buenas prácticas' en la formulación de políticas y programas dirigidos a trabajadoras y trabajadores migrantes" . International workshop on best practices of migrant workers and their families organised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Santiago de Chile, June 2000, ECLAC, Women and Development Unit, Santiago de Chile, 2000.
[5] Graeme, Hugo, "Migration and Women's Empowerment" in Presser, Harriet/Sen, Gita (ed), *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes, Moving beyond Cairo,* Oxford, 2000, p.288
[6] Daeren, Lieve, op. cit. 2000, p.10.
[7] Daeren,Lieve, op. cit, p.11.
[8] Daeren,Lieve, op.cit., p.11.
[9] Daeren, Lieve, op. cit.. p.12.
[10] Beltran, Marie Elena and Zulma Cristina**,** "Mujeres Migrantes en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires : Género, integración y discriminación" *in Buenos Aires. Ciudad CON Migrantes*, Programa Todas, Dirección General de la Mujer, Buenos Aires, 2002.
[11] Daeren,Lieve, op.cit., 2000, p.9.
[12] Interview of Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye by INSTRAW, April 2006.

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World Migration 2005, IOM, p. 381.

AN EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON FEMALE MIGRANTS: WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

Francois Farah
Chief, Population and Development Branch
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Female international migration has always been an integral part of migration. Women have always migrated – whether as girls, female adolescents, adult or elderly – either on their own or to join their family, in many cases their male relatives (for example under the rubric of *mehrem)*.

There has always been a case for family reunion in international law, and for migration policies to take into account the interests of the family, which is often a euphemism for women, children and the elderly. Interestingly, the first thing in media reports of forced migration is what might be called the trinity of vulnerability – women, children and the elderly. This has been a practical and useful way of attracting public attention and perhaps compassion to the plight of migrants and to the vulnerable situation of women, perhaps giving the incentive for (often ad-hoc) policy and programme interventions.

The vulnerability that the three groups have in common is related to different sources and dynamics: in the case of children and the elderly it is a value-free powerlessness, a consequence of their ages; but in the case of women and female adolescents it is a value-loaded disempowerment resulting from structural and institutional imbalances in both social organization and governance systems and structures. Very young or very old people are vulnerable because they cannot manage on their own; but women and female adolescents are structurally denied the exercise of their roles and their existence as full actors. These imbalances eventually operate in different forms, intensity and impact on female migrants before, during and after migration.

In forced migration for instance, women are always part of the fleeing waves of affected people, but they are often victimized twice: once because they are refugees and again because they are women. Examples here abound across countries and regions of the world.

International cross border movement – and even internal migration or displacement for that matter – has always concerned both men and women equally; but the science of international migration has not devoted systematic attention to female migration *per se*. There has been little attempt to track down its causes, monitor its differentiated processes and ascertain its gender specific outcomes on the basis of a systematic and conscious gender analysis. The methodologies of international migration studies have remained mainly non discriminatory, in the face of a phenomenon that is extremely sensitive to the structural and incidental discriminatory values and practices from which women usually suffer because they happen to be born female.

Recent statistics tell us that female migration has been on the rise over the last few decades and that women are now often moving on their own. It is difficult to say however whether rising figures themselves have triggered interest in the study of female migrants or whether it was the questions the figures raise about the social, economic and human rights implications of female migration. It is true though that interest in looking at the particular case of women migrants has gathered momentum over the recent years; hence the relevance of meetings such as this one.

One of the objectives and indeed merits of meetings such as this one is to provide an opportunity to structure the thinking about female migration from a life cycle approach and to track the continuum of discrimination and imbalances and the way it operates through the different manifestations related to female migration. We also hope that this opportunity will trigger interest in identifying and analyzing the epistemological and methodological gaps that need to be bridged in the gender analysis of migration.

Most studies would look at migration globally and would cosmetically highlight migration by sex perhaps for the sake of statistics. Even when migration is analyzed by sex it is often related to the observation of the phenomenon itself: when causes are analyzed little attention is devoted to the discriminatory causes, processes or outcomes that might operate on the sole basis of gender, at the family, community, the social setting, the market, and the national and international systems.

Female migration has a tremendous potential to be the opportunity and means of empowerment. It can and does give rise to structural and institutional changes and above all change in the mind set, the understanding and the life style; migration brings about change not only by redressing social and economic imbalances, but even more by redressing existing gender imbalances and inequalities.

It is exactly because of this potential that female migration involves a significant amount of tension, or rather many tensions in different environments, and makes female migrants subject to exploitation and abuse. It breaks through gender-biased established values and practices, and operates against a non-equal opportunity environment at home, in the community, in the market place, and across borders in both developed and developing settings. To put it simply, while men fight once to migrate, women usually fight twice: to counter their legacy of being born female; enhance their eligibility; protect their integrity; stand up to exploitation and abuse; uphold their rights and preserve their dignity throughout the migration project. The question is, should they fight alone?

This of course puts a tremendous onus on governments, societies, institutions of civil society the private sector both in sending, transit and receiving countries – as well as the international community in all its institutions and bodies – to make sure that appropriate policies are formulated and implemented; that institutions and mechanisms are devised to counter the structural elements of imbalances and discrimination; that different checks and balances and reporting and recourse systems are in place, and that they are monitored constantly for purposes of accountability.

Female migration can indeed be construed as a national and cross-border yardstick for monitoring gender equality within and across borders. It can reflect a continuum of gender discrimination throughout the process of movement, right from the idea for a woman to be free to move, to the system and market conditions facilitating or impeding this decision; to the processes and the risks involved in the movement, up to the human and social cost that needs to be checked and made as low as possible.

This expert group meeting has been designed to track female migration using a life-cycle approach. The sessions were devised to examine situations of women before they migrate and as they migrate; the people left behind while they are away; their situation abroad and the risks and opportunities they are exposed to; their possible return and the dynamics that operate at every stage of the migration process. The meeting will also be an opportunity to discuss the data gaps, and the gender analysis that is required to inform female migration policies; good practices in addressing the needs of female migrants and the policy, and programme implications.

A Few Observations and Food for Thought about Female Migration

Men and women circulate differently in the global economy, with women found predominantly in the service and welfare sectors. They are often found in gender-segregated and unregulated sectors of the economy.

- Women also migrate for non-economic reasons, fleeing surveillance by communities, getting out of a bad marriage, or fleeing from domestic violence. Women's migration can be not just an economic safety valve, but an empowering opportunity and a passage to a safer, more enabling environment.

- Migration can contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women by providing women migrants with income and the status, autonomy, freedom, and self-esteem that comes with employment. Women become more assertive as they see more opportunities opening up before them.

- Women's opportunities to migrate legally have typically been more limited than those of men. Education and skills enhancement opportunities for girls and women are limited in sending countries, which means that migrant women will end up in the lowest-paid and least attractive jobs. Women have less access to information on migration opportunities and often have less preparation than men to cope with conditions in the countries of destination.

- Discussions of the benefits and costs of migration typically focus on the economic aspect. However, there are significant social costs of migration which are not always obvious: children without mothers, husbands without spouses and families left behind. The migration of mothers often results in children dropping out of school or being neglected or abused. Perhaps the most painful social cost of migration is the knowledge of migrant mothers that they may be taking care of

other people's children (or parents) while they leave their own children (or parents) to be cared for by others.

- While migration policies of industrialized countries are not explicitly biased by sex, women can be denied entry by restrictions imposed for female types of occupations. Restrictive regulations which give women less chance than men of legal migration force women migrants into the hands of "brokers" or smugglers to help them migrate clandestinely, leaving them open to discrimination, exploitation, violence and abuse.

- The major destinations of international migrants among developing countries usually admit foreigners only for employment purposes, and male migrants tend to predominate. Since the late 1970s, the participation of women in labour migration to developing countries has been increasing, major destinations being the oil-rich countries in Western Asia and the countries of the Pacific Rim in Eastern and South-eastern Asia.

- Many women migrants, especially in the informal sector of the economy, are without adequate protection and may be victims of human trafficking, violence and sexual abuse. Around 80 per cent of trafficked persons are women. While victims may be sold or abducted, the majority of persons who are trafficked seek an improvement of their current life situation and are misled or in other ways trapped into a trafficking scheme.

- Vulnerable sectors of the economy, including the garment industry, sweat shops, the sex industry and domestic work should be monitored and labour standards enforced to detect trafficking and exploitative situations. Moreover, monitoring policies, institutional mechanisms and law enforcement tools for reporting grievances should be in place in both sending and receiving countries, to ensure that victims have recourse to the criminal justice system and legal aid, and that perpetrators are brought to justice.

- Structural, legal and institutional measures are needed to ensure women's access to formal migration channels and formal employment which offer more protection and labour rights. Women migrants need access to adequate health care, including reproductive health.

- Measures are also needed to ensure that women migrants, especially those who are in the lowest-status occupations, many of whom lack access to social support systems, are not further marginalized in host countries.

3. WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF WOMEN BEFORE THEY MIGRATE?

PUSH FACTORS RESULTING IN THE DECISION FOR WOMEN TO MIGRATE

Monica Boyd
University of Toronto
Toronto, Canada

In the absence of catastrophic events, the movements of people from one area to another are primarily the direct result of inadequate economic and social opportunities in the area of emigration and superior opportunities in the area of immigration. Other factors however, such as war, political coercion and natural calamities, have been responsible for some of the greatest displacements of population in human history.[1]

The context for migration decisions: poverty and gender inequality

Written almost 45 years ago, these migration-inducing factors are still true today. The traditional list of push factors for out-migration includes economic impoverishment, human insecurity, and demographic pressures, fuelled by high birth rates, particularly in less developed areas. However, the list is too general, and incomplete: if poverty, natural disasters including famine, and political instability or war provide a broad context for exit, so too does gender inequality. Who migrates – and who is encouraged and allowed to migrate – also reflect the status of women, both in sending and receiving countries, and their expected roles.

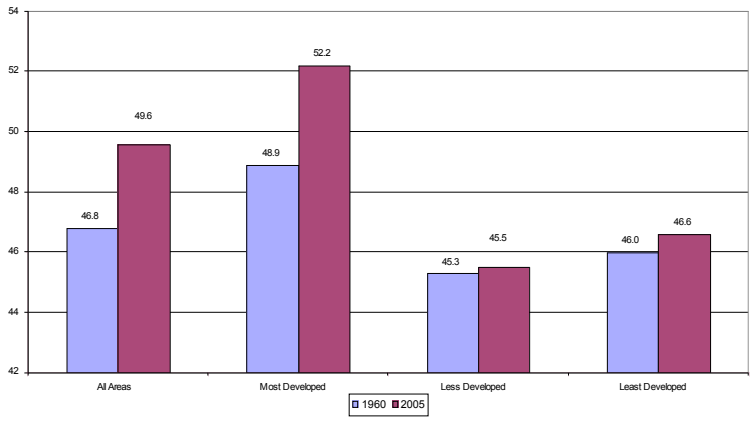
Succinctly put, poverty, political chaos, war, and natural disasters *and* gender inequalities in the countries of origin are responsible for the decisions that lead to the migration of women. The influence of all these factors may be seen in the increasing presence of women in international migration flows; why women migrate (and why they do not), and – as other papers for this expert group meeting observe – in the consequences for women.

Worldwide, females and males now participate equally in international migration. The growing number of women in migration varies however according to the development levels of destination areas. Today, females represent over half of international migrants in the more developed areas, and slightly less than half in the less developed and least developed areas of the world (Chart 1). These variations reflect differentials among countries in labour demands, wages and standards of living, and sites of refuge that help determine where migrants go.

The feminisation of migration shown in Chart 1 parallels two other transformations that affect women: the feminisation of poverty and the feminisation of work. Economic development can include structural change, including the transformation of the agriculture industry; the demise of small locally owned industries and the introduction of new industries by multinational corporations; rising male unemployment because of the

loss of traditional sites of employment; and increasing international debt load accompanied by government need to generate foreign currency. Women's labour force participation is thus deployed to provide alternative sources of income. But the forces that have marginalized the employment of men also may weaken the employment and income-generating capacities of women. International migration is a response to these conditions, for it often generates hard currency in the form of remittances to states while providing income to households and family members in the countries of origin.[2]

Chart 1: Percentage Female, International Migrants by Region, 1960 & 2005



Source: United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division. World Migrant Stock: the 2005 Revision Population Database. Web address: http://esa.un.org/migration

Although poverty and related incapacities to make a living are the important factors underlying the international migration of women, the actual migration decision is influenced by state- and community-specific factors and by family and individual situations. But these are also sites of gender inequalities, and the degree and type of these inequalities also influence female migration. For example, if females do not have the same access as males to education or receive the same quality of education, women may be less in demand as migrants, and less able to obtain the financial resources and information necessary for migration. In fact, it can be argued that gender inequalities set the conditions for whether or not poverty produces female migration, the life cycle stages when migration occurs, and the form of migration.

The migration hump: implications for female migration

Poverty and gender inequality are powerful forces influencing female migration; however, levels of poverty and levels of gender inequality affect the magnitude of migration. Experts argue that extreme impoverishment makes international migration unlikely, simply because people have few resources for migration, and transportation and communication infrastructures are poor. Instead, it is in the intermediate stages of economic development that international migration is most likely to occur. In particular, rising educational levels stimulate aspirations for suitable employment, increase knowledge about the world, and

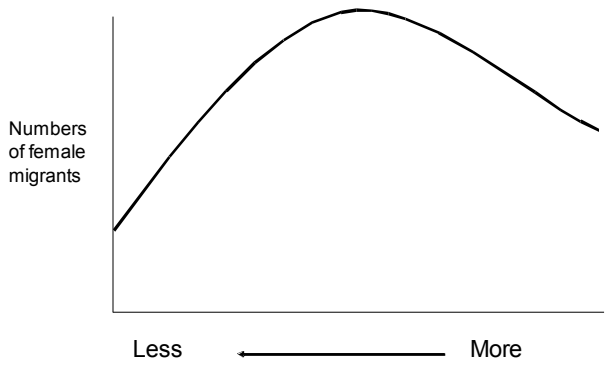
increase capacity for action. The economic restructuring that accompanies economic development also provides motivations for migration.[3]

It is reasonable to expect the same relationships between migration and levels of gender inequality. When conditions are such that women are married as children or as young adolescents; receive little and poor-quality education; bear many children at young ages; are denied access to credit and banking; and have few rights that are not linked to male family members, they will lack both the decision-making capacity and the resources to migrate.

As women's status improves, their potential for empowerment is enhanced. At least two other factors begin to operate during development: first, states may realize that women as well as men generate income as migrants, and may set up agencies to facilitate emigration; second, evolving linkages between sending and receiving areas of migration may stimulate further migration though a variety of mechanisms such as increased communication, the growth in recruiting agencies, and the use of informal social networks by migrants.

Because improvements in the status of women are more likely during the process of economic development than under conditions of extreme impoverishment, the two processes – women's improved status and economic development – are linked. The result is a migration hump where the migration of women is most likely during the intermediate stages of economic development and improvements in the status of women. When development is advanced and gender equality is high, migration is likely to decline because the basic conditions that motivated migration – the search for a better livelihood and for a better life – are gone (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Migration Hump as Determined by Levels of Economic Development and Gender Equality



Migration over the life cycle

Although migration decisions and the act of migration result from poverty and gender inequality, they are also affected by women's life-cycle stages. This is because the migration decisions and migration experiences of women as well as men are governed by expectations, gender roles, and social institutions that vary with age. Degrees of assumed dependency and autonomy also vary with age, as does the capacity to make migration decisions. This variation is illustrated in demographic vocabulary: young children and mothers who migrate alongside male heads of households are called "tied movers" as opposed to "autonomous" migrants who are assumed to have greater agency in the decision to move.

Migration to more developed regions frequently includes the migration of girl children and women as family members. Most adult women who migrate as family members are relatively young, usually between 20 and 40. Depending on the status of women in the country of origin, and their status within families, such women may or may not have inputs into the migration decision process. And not all daughters, wives and mothers migrate. In many instances where men migrate for labour purposes and temporarily, women of all ages and young children including daughters remain in the origin country or area of residence.

Women also migrate without family members. Studies suggest that women may migrate because they seek personal benefits and greater autonomy, and wish to remove themselves from patriarchal settings, including settings in which violence is prevalent.[4] Women also migrate for purposes of marriage and to earn livelihoods. For some, the decision to migrate rests on improvements in gender equality that allow women to access the finances necessary for moving, and give them the freedom and education necessary to obtain information about migration prospects.

However, it cannot be said that migration for marriage or for income-generating work always results from women's autonomous decisions or represents situations of empowerment. For example, where the status of women is low and filial acquiescence is expected, young girls may expect to be employed in domestic work from an early age, with no opportunity to be part of decision-making. In describing the trafficking of young Asian women as sex workers, Skeldon notes: "Lack of alternative opportunities in village economies, and the responsibility of daughters to sacrifice themselves to support their families, undermines the whole freedom of choice in poor societies. In cases where a family may have been abandoned by the male head of household … the adolescent daughter may represent the only realistic hope of earning money to support the family."[5]

Types of migration

Together with poverty, gender inequalities influence the type of migration that women undertake. This is particularly evident in the decisions that surround three forms of migration: a) female labour migration; b) trafficking in women and c) flight.

***Labour migration*:** Women now migrate as domestic workers; as entertainers; as skilled workers, particularly in health care fields, and as workers for the export industries of other countries. However, women's decisions to migrate for such work and their capacity to do so may be diminished by proscriptive gender norms; by reduced or no access to monetary funds; by discriminatory laws and practices, and by the absence of networks that provide information about migration and employment.

More concretely, laws or practices that do not allow women to inherit or own property, and limit or prohibit their use of banks, may also raise barriers against women's access to the financial resources necessary for migration. Gender norms also may prohibit – or impose costs on – the autonomous labour migration of women. A study of Bangladeshi men and women in Malaysia finds that family members considered female members going abroad a danger to the status of the family because it implied inappropriate behaviour; Bangladeshi men in Malaysia avoided these women migrants, arguing that they behaved improperly. This perception that migrant women violated norms of female-appropriate behaviour meant that Bangladeshi migrant women were cheated in economic transactions associated with migration while they were in Bangladesh, and when they were abroad were denied access to support systems and information networks dominated by Bangladeshi men. Violations of gender scripts also had implications upon their return. One father expressed the view that his migrant daughter probably would not find a husband when she came back.[6]

Conditions associated with gender inequalities may motivate rather than inhibit migration. The experience of personal violence, forced or unhappy marriages, lack of employment or income earning opportunities in their own countries may also induce women to move, although they will still need the information and resources necessary for migration. Family members may actually encourage women to migrate as workers, most often when women have acquired skills; where a strong labour demand exists for these skills, and where families see women as dutiful wives and daughters who will be diligent in sending money home.[7]

Returning women migrants who create networks of information and financial assistance enhance migration decisions and increase the likelihood of their implementation.[8] Other factors include the existence of liaison and recruitment agencies. The gendered nature of worldwide demand for women's labour is also important. In the most developed countries, women's rising participation in the labour force generates demand for service sector workers including domestics, to undertake care-work and tasks previously performed by women working unpaid in the home. In some countries the presence of a domestic worker may enhance the employer's status, stimulating and perpetuating the international migration of domestics.[9]

***Trafficking*:** Poverty, the need to make a living, and gender inequalities are associated with women's vulnerability to trafficking. Worldwide, estimates place the annual number of women and children trafficked at more than one million.[10] Poor or non-existent opportunities for employment and low incomes encourage the trafficking of women, primarily as sex workers; although the voluntary migration of mail order or web-based

brides can produce conditions similar to trafficking.[11] At least in Asia, highly restricted legal migration and women's demand for overseas employment to match their rising educational levels are also lay them open to trafficking.[12] Vulnerability to trafficking also reflects family circumstances and personal goals. Although the most compelling reason unquestionably is economic, studies report that some trafficked women report wanting to see the world, to have multicultural experiences, and to experience autonomy as reasons for seeking migration.[13]

Although economic factors motivate migration decisions, gender inequality permeates the trafficking of women. In some societies, the low status of women – the fact that they are less valued then men – and filial obligations make women rather than men vulnerable to trafficking. In both sending and receiving countries, women may gain little assistance from authorities and find themselves criminalized, both because of their low status, and because low-salaried law officers accept bribes from traffickers.

Development initiatives, anti-trafficking actions and improvements in women's rights are critical to diminishing the trafficking of women. Trafficked women who return to their home communities may find the conditions that induced their migration fundamentally unaltered, even though there is still great need for re-integration and employment.

***Women in flight*:** Political instability and environmental catastrophes are millennium-old causes of migration. In addition, during the second half of the twentieth century, the dismantling of colonial empires, the break-up of the USSR, and warfare affected sizeable numbers of people. Here too, poverty plays a role: lack of resources may cause states to implode, leaving no government in control; no functioning justice system; no infrastructure; no schooling; no organized medical care; no viable internal or external economic markets, and malfunctioning or worthless banking and monetary systems.[14] Sustained environmental degradation and catastrophes enhance the potential for state implosion.

As of the beginning of 2005, the number of persons in refugee-like conditions stood at 19.5 million, increasing by 13 per cent from the previous year.[15] Women, children and the elderly are considered the most vulnerable, and represent an estimated 80 per cent of a "normal" refugee population.[16] In many societies, when states are unable or unwilling to protect them and where women have lower status than men, they are especially vulnerable to violence, including rape. Such vulnerability can act as a cause of migration for individual women: however, most refugee-like women have fled conditions of systemic violence with their children and other family members who may be the chief decision makers.

Voluntary repatriation to the area of origin is a preferred solution to massive population displacements. But successful repatriation – which is a form of migration – is accompanied by action to regain economic livelihoods and to protect women during the process of return. As Martin[17] and others have observed, development assistance is crucial during this period and it is essential that women be active and influential participants in the planning process for such returns. Refugee women need to be empowered to make their own decisions and to declare their desires to return or to opt out. Gender inequality means that women do not

always receive the full range of information; women need the same access as men to information on which to make decisions. Because infrastructure in the former areas of residence has often been destroyed, it is essential that assistance be provided in areas as diverse as educational training, health care, reclaiming property, and obtaining employment. If the areas of return are characterized by beliefs, practices and laws that handicap women and cause gender inequalities, then refugee women may face significant barriers in re-establishing themselves and their families.

Conclusion

Decisions to migrate occur within broad social and economic contexts. Impoverishment and the need to generate income provide women and men alike with strong reasons for migrating. However, whether poverty translates into decisions and capabilities for female migration depends on state and community settings and on family and individual circumstances. This paper argues that where gender inequality is high, women may have little input into migration decisions and may encounter difficulties in migration. Variations among women with respect to migration over the life cycle and in the type of migration undertaken are also influenced by gender inequalities that shape decisions.

Recommendations

Materials covered in this paper indicate the following areas for action:

- Economic development and improvements in the status of women are required to reduce the impoverished and unequal conditions that fuel the labour migration of women, and sustain the trafficking of women and migration for marriage as "mail- or web-order" brides.

- Countries should review laws and common practices to remove inequalities between women and men in access to education, in the right to inherit, in the right to own property, in the provision of bank loans and availability of bank services, and in the content and practice of the law. Such inequalities deny women the same opportunities as men to migrate.

- Gender equality practices such as increasing the access of women to quality education, and ensuring their access to loans and credit will improve the conditions under which women migrate.

- Female migrant workers who return to their countries of origin are a resource that provides information and assistance to other women seeking to migrate. Sending countries should harness these resources and encourage local organizations that build on the inputs of returning women migrants. Governments may wish to consider developing partnerships with NGOs to provide economic and informational support for women seeking to migrant.

- In addition to collaborative initiatives to further economic development, all governments should develop practices that prevent all forms of trafficking of women (as well as children and men). Anti-trafficking initiatives are essential, as are activities that reintegrate trafficked women who return to their countries and places of origin.

- Steps should be taken to ensure that women who are in flight receive the same information as men and are active and equal participants in making decisions about repatriation.

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SUPPORT SYSTEMS TO ASSIST WOMEN IN THE PROCESS OF MIGRATION: THE CASE OF INDONESIA

Carunia Mulya Firdausy
Economics Research Professor
Deputy Minister for Societal Dynamics
State Minister of Research and Technology
Jakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

Women face many problems and constraints in the process of migration, despite the fact that their skills and contribution are valued and needed by their home country as well as by the host country. They face problems not only in their own country, but more importantly also in the labour receiving countries. Support systems needed can be grouped into three components: first, when women are going to apply to work abroad; second, when they are working in the destination country; third, when they return. All these support systems should be established in both sending and receiving countries.

Introduction

This paper discusses support systems to assist women in the process of migration. The Indonesian economy has not recovered to the levels seen before 1996. Economic growth has been under 5 per cent since 1997, and the economy also faces longstanding problems of poverty and unemployment. Open unemployment in 2005 was about 11.6 million or 10.5 per cent of the total labour force.[1] Of this total unemployment, about 47.9 per cent were women mostly in urban areas (53 per cent). In addition the number of underemployed workers (defined as workers working less than 35 hours in a week) was about 40.1 million, or 37 per cent of the total 106.9 million labour force.

Unemployment has increased the numbers of the poor. Using the World Bank's poverty marker of the PPP (purchasing power parity) equivalent of US$2 a day, the number of the poor in 2005 was about 110 million people or 53 per cent of Indonesia's population.[2] Using the Central Board of Statistics official poverty line of Rp. 175 000 a month (equivalent to US$19.44),[3] the poor were about 23.6 per cent of the population, compared with 11.3 per cent in 1996.[4]

One way to reduce increasing unemployment and the numbers of the poor is to support workers to migrate abroad. From 2001 to 2003, the government officially sent abroad 1,069,406 workers. Before these years, there were about 2.5 million Indonesians working abroad.[5] However, these figures exclude undocumented Indonesian migrants. Studies estimated the number of Indonesian illegal migrants in Malaysia alone in 2000 at about one million.[6] The Department of Manpower and Transmigration estimated that illegal Indonesia labour migrants between 1999 and 2001 were about 3.5 million.[7]

Number, types of work and destination countries of women migrants

Of the total number of migrant workers sent abroad between 2001 and 2003, about 76.4 per cent were women. Most are semi-skilled and unskilled workers, mainly maids and entertainers. Men are mostly in hospital work, or in construction, transportation, agriculture and estate work. .

Destination countries of women migrant workers in 2003 were in order of importance Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, followed by Kuwait, Singapore, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Korea (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of migrant workers by sex and country destinations in 2003

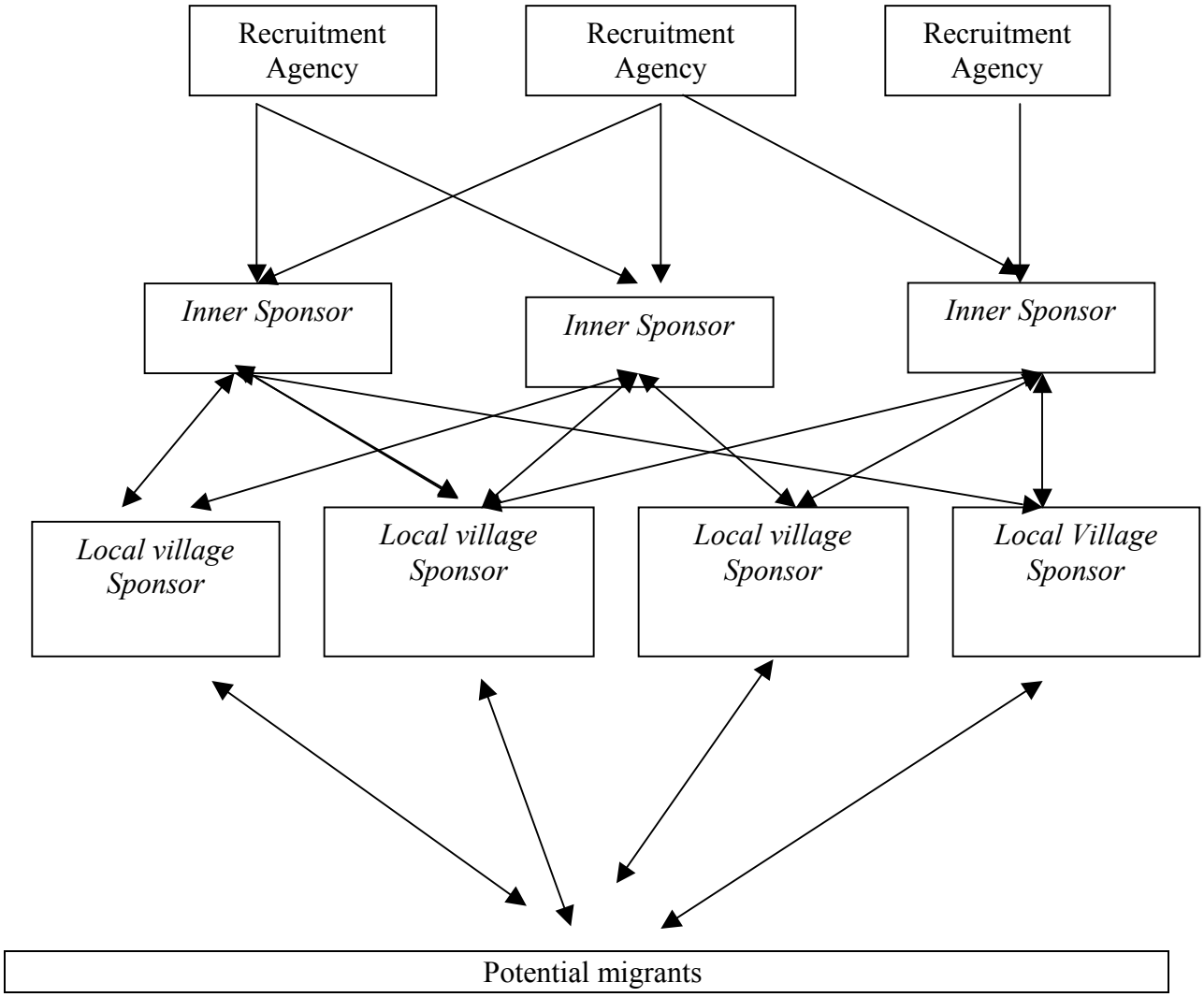
No	Region/State	Male	Female	Total
I.	**ASIA PACIFIC**			
1	Malaysia	57 034	32 405	89 439
2	Singapore	5	6 098	6 103
3	Brunei Darussalam	388	758	1 146
4	Hong Kong	1	3 508	3 509
5	Taiwan	1 307	623	1 930
6	Republic of Korea	6 390	1 105	7 495
7	Thailand	100	0	100
8	Japan	0	0	0
	Total	65 225	44 497	109 722
II.	**MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA**			
1	Saudi Arabia	14 304	154 737	169 038
2	United Arab Emirates	98	1 377	1.475
	Kuwait	109	12 159	12 268
4	Bahrain	0	88	88
5	Qatar	2	178	180
6	Oman	0	495	495
7	Jordan	0	226	226
8	Yemen	0	0	0
9	Cyprus	0	0	0
	Total	16 415	169 257	183 770

Source: Department of Manpower and Transmigration, 2005.

Recruitment process of labour migrants

The recruitment process of the Indonesian labour migrants by the employment recruitment agency (*Perusahaan Jasa Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*-PJTKI) has not been so simple. Most of the potential labour migrants are not directly recruited by the employment recruitment agency. . The recruitment process is started by the local village sponsor who seeks potential migrants. He brings them to the inner sponsor, who proceeds to the recruitment agency (Figure 1). The local village sponsor seeks potential migrant workers by visiting villages where they know they will find men and women who wish to work abroad. This suggests two things. First, information on the availability of employment abroad has been limited. Second, there is no government support to workers in the process of seeking jobs abroad.

Figure 1. Recruitment process of Indonesian labour migrants



Why do we need support systems for women migrant workers?

There are at least three reasons to provide support systems for women in the process of migration from Indonesia abroad. First, it is because most women migrants are unskilled, not well trained nor well-educated. Second, there is much evidence that women have been more vulnerable than men to mistreatment, exploitation, discrimination and abuse in the process of migration. Third, it is because there are differences between labour laws in destination countries and the country of origin.

Women are often cheated by the mediator or agents about the type of jobs they are going to get abroad. In 2005 there were 739 recorded cases in which women cheated by mediators or agents were forced to become prostitutes when they went abroad. Second, there is no standard fee structure for administration and migrants' training prior to work abroad. Third, the training and education provided by agents are sometimes poor.

Many women have been mistreated and abused by employers and employment agencies abroad. Mistreatment includes sexual harassment, physical violence, overwork, unpaid salary, denial of communication with relatives and friends, and poor living conditions, to mention just a few. Mistreatment and abuse by employers in overseas countries and by the PJTKI services company in Indonesia encouraged the Minister of Women's Empowerment, together with many non-governmental organizations, to urge government to ban the export of Indonesian workers in 2000. However, this policy did not last long because of an increase of unemployment in Indonesia.

Women migrants face new problems when they return to Indonesia. These include financial exploitation by officials and others on arrival, and lack of government attention to to creating employment opportunities for return migrants or maximising the experience and abilities acquired abroad.

Support systems to assist women in migration process

Support systems can be grouped into three components. First, when women are going to apply to work abroad. Second, when they are working in the destination country. Third, when they return from working abroad.

The first group includes access to information on:

- how to obtain a job overseas;
- the jobs available in destination countries;
- migrants' rights and conditions of employment, including what may be needed for their return to their country of origin.

This group also includes training and education related to their work abroad.

When women are working in their destination countries, they need access to:

- communications with their family, relatives and friends in their country of origin as well as in the place where they work;
- cultural and religious observances;
- social security, insurance and banking facilities;
- legal institutions and protection;
- transfer facilities to move from one job to another during the period of their work permit to avoid a dependence on unscrupulous employers;
- visas, or permission to travel at will between host and the home countries.

Finally, when migrants return from overseas, it is considered important to create employment opportunities and maximise their abilities and experience acquired abroad.

Indonesia has adopted laws and regulations for migrant workers. These include the law no. 39/2004 on placement and protection towards workers overseas, the law on National Social Security No. 40/2004 to assist the poor in the informal sector (including migrant workers); law No. 7/ 1984 on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women; law No. 39/1999 on human rights (including trafficking women), and the Presidential Decree no. 88/2002 on the national action plan to eradicate trafficking of girls and women.

However, these rules and regulations have not been well implemented and there is no effective coordination among concerned ministries and other stakeholders in Indonesia. Similarly, bilateral agreements between receiving and sending countries are weak and ineffectively implemented, and are still applied in a discriminatory manner. Much remains to be done by the Government of Indonesia, the governments of labour receiving countries and other relevant stakeholders to assist women in the process of migration.

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4. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SENDING COUNTRIES IN THE ABSENCE OF WOMEN MIGRANTS?

IMPACT OF FEMALE MIGRATION ON COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN: THE CASE OF GHANA

Elizabeth Adjei
Director, Ghana Immigration Service
Ministry of the Interior
Accra, Ghana

Introduction

This paper is not a research study but an observation from the point of view of an immigration practitioner and a policymaker. Its aim is to add to the existing body of knowledge to help formulate appropriate policies that reflect women's participation in the migratory process.

It is said that about half of the world's migrants are women. Global estimates by sex confirm that by 1960, the number of female cross-border migrants reached almost the same number as male migrants, and this ratio has not changed significantly since then (ILO, 2006). However, there have been dramatic changes in the patterns of migration, both internally and internationally. More women are migrating independently as main income earners instead of following their husbands, because of increased demand for female labour in the service industries in big cities, and greater social acceptance of women's economic independence and mobility.

Evidence suggests that female migration has a special potential for development. Women are important agents of change and development. Migration is a strategy to broaden the options available to women and has challenged some of the entrenched discriminatory practices against women, thereby contributing to their empowerment and promoting gender equality.

West Africa has a long history of population mobility and women have migrated in large numbers for years, fleeing conflicts, in search of better life or as spousal migrants. Today, independent female migration is attracting more and more attention from researchers. Money earned by women migrants has been an important contribution to national development and has heightened women's self esteem, making female communities more powerful in their home countries.

Migration in Ghana

The Republic of Ghana has had a long history of female migration which may be traced back to the pre- independence era. Women migrated to and from Ghana as autonomous traders between the West African countries Niamey, Nigeria, Benin and Togo. More recently, skilled and semi-skilled women have migrated as professionals to recipient countries either on their own or in the company of their spouses in search of better economic prospects. At the same time, Ghana has played host to reasonably large

numbers of female migrants from neighbouring West African countries and the international community more generally. Underpinning all of this movement is a solid financial base interacting strongly with the social, economic and political structures of the country.

This presentation attempts to discuss trends in female migration, the role and position of women as migrants and how these impact Ghana socially and economically. Specifically, the paper discusses the impact of female migration on the health, education, employment and economic sectors. The paper argues that despite the overwhelming presence of women in migratory flows much of the research on migration has neglected the presence or role of women because there is a pervasive assumption that the international migrant is an economically motivated male. As a result, policies and regulations do not typically reflect the participation of women.

Consequently, the paper attempts to show that women are autonomous and independent activators of family migration who contribute to the national economy by remitting a larger share of income earned to those they leave behind. They create employment opportunities in their countries of origin by establishing small businesses, and in the process contribute to their empowerment and gender equality in the longer term. Finally, the paper discusses some of the negative impacts of female migration in Ghana, constraints inherent in female migration and policy considerations for addressing those constraints.

Much of the information provided is based on secondary literature and anecdotal evidence. Primary data was not obtained due to time limitations.

Historical developments and trends of emigration from Ghana

Ghana is a medium-sized country in West Africa with a population of about 20 million people. It is a country of significant out-migration, and according to some recent studies, ranks fifth in Africa in emigration. Migration in Ghana has been described as a cultural ideal, people do not feel they have "arrived" until they have had a stint abroad. High-ranking public officials, businessmen and clergy have all lived somewhere else at one time or another.

Ghana enjoys significant benefits from migration through remittances and return migration. Remittances have currently peaked at about $US1.4 billion in 2004, (Bank of Ghana, 2004) from a low of about $US290 million in 1999 (Bank of Ghana, 2005). This figure constitutes about a third of GDP. But Ghana also suffers severely from brain drain, especially in the health and education sectors. In terms of percentage of population, Ghana reportedly ranks first in Africa in the emigration of the highly skilled. The departure of the best professionals has eroded the quality of the public and social services sectors and has undermined Ghana's capacity to meet its basic developmental goals, particularly as it relates to health and education.

In Ghana, both men and women migrate in equal numbers. Migration for a better life is recognised and even encouraged. Returnees are always cited as role models in society, regardless of their level of participation in the labour market. Furthermore, in Ghana, custom gives women more economic autonomy than their counterparts in many of the other countries, but requires them to be self-supporting. This facilitates independent migration and allows them to reap the rewards if they are successful.

Ghana is strategically positioned in the West Africa sub-region in terms of migratory flows. Several factors account for this. Ghana was the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence from colonial rule in 1957. The first Republican administration actively pursued pan-Africanism and in this vein, encouraged freedom of movement in the sub-region. In addition the country enjoyed relative economic prosperity until the late 1960s, and was a destination country for many migrants from neighbouring West African countries of Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Mali, and Niger among others. In 1960, immigrants formed about 8.3 per cent of the total population of Ghana, and emigration from Ghana involved a relatively small number of people, most of whom were students and professionals (Owusu-Ankomah, 2006).

The economic crisis of the late 1970s and early 1980s in Ghana changed the face of female migration. More skilled and semi-skilled women migrated on their own or as migrants accompanying their spouses in search of greener pastures, mainly to neighbouring West African countries. This out-migration was aggravated by bad governance under both civilian and military regimes. Migration therefore became a basic survival strategy for individuals and families to cope with difficult economic and social conditions. Since the mid-1980s, the destination countries of migrants have become more diverse. Large numbers of Ghanaians have moved not only to neighbouring West African countries but also to other parts of the African continent as a whole, and to major cities in Europe and North America.

Rural-urban migration has also been fuelled by increasing poverty, and the deterioration and inadequacy of social services and benefits, infrastructure and employment opportunities. As a result, females including adolescents and young people migrate to larger cities in search of employable skills, either through formal education or informally as apprentices in small traditionally female sectors such as sewing and hairdressing.

Causes and determinants of migration

The decision to migrate in Ghana is usually a response to a combination of economic, social and political factors such as poverty, landlessness and economic dislocations. Linked with factors such as trade, urbanisation and the growth of administrative sectors, agriculture, land degradation and rural poverty, migration has played a major role in shaping settlement patterns. In particular, Ghana's rural population face a stark choice, either to become farmers or they leave for the cities. However, no farmers' children aspire to follow in their parents' footsteps, because farming is not seen as rewarding. Poor education levels and employment possibilities have contributed to the exodus of young men and women. This exodus is inextricably linked to urbanisation. Throughout

the developing world, people are migrating to urban cities because they see little future for themselves in rural areas.

In Northern Ghana, migration to cities has become a tradition for girls. When they marry, brides are expected to have certain items, such as pots, pans, cloth and money. A girl who has nothing is considered a disgrace. Girls feel obliged to migrate to the south, dropping out of school, to work to earn money. Parents put pressure on girls to leave their homes because the strain of providing for offspring is so great. Some girls also run away rather than be forced into fosterage or marriages in which they are enslaved by rivals or husbands. Moreover, in certain ethnic groups, parents believe that girls are less important than boys and that girls need just enough education to enable trade.

Females who have relatives in the city move out to try their luck. Others move out on their own or are given to "Madames" in the cities who offer them to strangers as domestic servants. Those who move as independent migrants end up on the streets as hawkers of street porters, referred to as "kayayee".

The introduction of market economy in the 1980s led to extreme price instability and poverty. In particular, the IMF structural adjustment programme which accompanied the economic decline referred to above contributed to a preponderance of women in the migration process. The economic position of many Ghanaian traders worsened under the strain of major cuts in public spending; agricultural output decreased and the informal sector which accounted for about 80 per cent of total female labour faced collapse. With no competitive skills and education, many Ghanaian women suddenly found themselves without income earning opportunities

Hardship at home and a strong desire for a higher standard of living provided incentives for both men and women to seek work abroad. Most of the women involved accompanied their husbands first, and then found jobs in their new countries. But an increased number of females took part in this movement independently with fairly clear expectations of what they wanted to achieve for themselves and their extended families. Some needed to support their own children, and kin, and others needed to acquire capital to start their own businesses. In a study of Ghanaian prostitutes in Abidjan, where a large influx of males from the neighbouring Sahel countries had created a huge sex imbalance, Anarfi notes that commercial sex became one of the easy entry jobs and one of the limited range of options women had in making a living away from home (Anarfi, 1992).

Types of female migration in Ghana

An analysis of female migration since Ghana attained independence in 1957 reveals several types of female migration in Ghana. These include: spousal migration, independent migration, rural-urban migration, commercial migration and the migration of the highly skilled.

Spousal migration
The pattern of female migration in Ghana has followed closely that of their counterparts elsewhere in West Africa. According to Surdakasa, until 1970 the size of the female component of migration was small (1997). The focus was on male migrants who migrated coastally for fishing or from the north to the south for farming. Any reference to female migrants related to wives left behind to tend the farms, care for the children and maintain village cohesion. Where migration was for longer periods, wives from the labour-supplying areas might accompany their husbands, or a woman might be married off to an out-migrant. The women were considered to be mere participants in the migration process. But they had of necessity to look to self- employment as a source of income.

Associational migration also includes women who accompany their husbands to serve in missions abroad, or as expatriates to countries whose laws do not permit spouses to work. Women in this position tend to stay at home, take on lower-skilled and therefore lower-paid jobs, usually illegally. They are consequently unable to utilise their skills: they lose income and in the longer term their self esteem as their economic base erodes relative to that of their male partners, reinforcing gender inequalities.

Rural-urban migration
Significant levels of migration from zones of relative deprivation to zones of opportunity have existed for decades in West Africa. This has involved rural-rural movement from the Sahelian north to the forested South and rural-urban migration to major towns and cities to work in the informal and domestic sector. As Mabojunge (1985), notes, women predominated in this sector because they did not have the educational qualifications required for wage employment and would become market traders or similar occupations. Scattered writings and observations indicate that there was a substantial population of female migrants in most of the big cities in Ghana in the 1970s. By 1984, the women outnumbered men in the urban population.

More recently, younger women have become a steadily increasing proportion of the rural urban migration for education and skills training opportunities and for marriage. As Caldwell (1968), points out, one of the most reliable determinants of rural/urban migration is formal education. Young women who are literate regard themselves as more educated than the first generation of migrants, and overqualified for the rural setting. They look to big cities for employment opportunities. Most women in this category work as domestic servants in homes of relatives or complete strangers. They earn enough money to pay for apprenticeship or to remit their parents. In recent times, the migration of young females from the north to the south of the country as street vendors has been a major cause for concern.

Commercial migration
Next to agriculture, trading is the most important economic activity in the West African sub-region, employing both men and women. It involves the exchange and movement of various consumption items from coastal areas to the interior, from urban to rural areas and vice versa. It could also be described as the one economic activity which has no

boundaries in the West African region. Their participation in this sector has led to the migration of large numbers of Ghanaian women within Ghana, the sub region and internationally particularly along the trans-ECOWAS route, Ouagadougou-Abidjan-Monrovia-Lagos. Women have been conspicuous in this trade particularly in relation to trading in foodstuffs, fabrics and basic household consumer items, greatly outnumbering men. They often travel to big markets, within or outside the country, distributing imported goods and on each visit spend days or weeks away from their homes.

Migration of skilled and semi-skilled females

Changing labour market trends and the general feminisation of the workforce globally has increased opportunities for skilled female migrants. Most were university-educated graduates who are seeking better opportunities in the labour market, who ended up in the welfare and social professions. Nursing has become the most female dominated sector. Since the 1990s however, the emigration of nurses from Ghana has been exceptionally high. Much of this movement has been unregistered, and estimates vary widely, but Ghana is known to have exported thousands of nurses to several countries in Europe and America in the last five years alone.

According to Buchan and Dovlo (2004), nurse vacancy rates in Ghana are estimated to have increased significantly between 1998 and 2004. In 2001 alone, about 3000 Ghanaian nurses left the country, and it is reported that membership of the Ghana Registered Nurses Association fell from 12,000 to 9,000 in 2003, with the UK and USA the major recipient countries.

Along with this is the loss of about 30 per cent of nursing tutors, threatening to limit the country's capacity to train more nurses. It is also reported that enrolment at the Nursing Department in the University of Ghana has increased dramatically over the last few years, raising fears that more nurses are preparing to migrate in the near future. Even though Ghana experiences severe brain drain in the health sector, it appears that little gender analysis has been done on the brain drain of women. However, it is clear that sex-segregation in labour market influences which professional categories are able to migrate.

Impacts of female migration on Ghana

The economic and social impacts of female migration on families and communities in Ghana are quite significant. As noted by Bilsborrow and Zlotnik (1992), there are very strong links between female migration and the changing roles and status of women. It has been noted earlier that young and middle aged women in Ghana migrate in response to their increased responsibilities in providing for their dependent family members. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Ghanaian women generally perceive migration as successful and beneficial. In the opinion of women interviewed in a baseline study, migration helps them realise their aspirations through better opportunities deriving from the labour market. It allows women to break with traditional roles and patterns of dependence and to assert greater autonomy over their lives, primarily through increased incomes and benefits derived there from.

Remittances constitute a crucial component of revenue for the Ghanaian economy and women contribute a substantial share. Remittance figures in Ghana are not disaggregated, but it is generally believed that women remit more than men, because of their gender-related roles, and that women are also the main recipients. In particular, the distribution of remittances from female migrants indicates that the process of migration includes more than just the individual migrant, and that the financial benefits are experienced across the family systems. In fact in Ghana, the migration of females usually signifies the extended migration of other women in the family.

Remittances are used by families and friends to meet daily consumption needs, health care and other social obligations. If the women have left children behind, support for the children and their caretaker, usually the grandmother, is a priority. Where the woman has migrated with her husband and children, the uterine siblings are a priority and must be taken care of. They are therefore the woman's obligation, especially among the Akans where inheritance of property is through uterine siblings. Women are therefore expected to contribute to their own families back home. Where women are unmarried and independent, taking on these responsibilities is fairly uncomplicated, but where a woman has her own biological family, balancing the needs of the conjugal and extended families creates some tensions (Manu, 1999).

A study of human trafficking and forced labour in Northern Ghana reports that migration improves the well being of migrants and their families through remittances or money accrued from circular migratory work. Such monies are utilised by beneficiaries for food, cloths, school fees and hospital fees. (Mohammed and Apusigah, 2005). Migrants engaged in cultivation, processing or retail of food return home with foodstuffs to augment existing stocks. The study also observes that women migrants are keen to build houses for their families. They return to roof their homes with iron sheets, furnish their rooms and set up micro businesses in addition to their other social and cultural obligations, such as contributing to funerals in their communities.

Remittances change unequal gender relations, earning respect for the women who remit, and providing more resources and control to women who receive remittances. It is particularly remarkable in rural households that women who are in a position to send remittances home feel that they are better able to contribute to decision-making within their homes and are able to renegotiate their status within their communities. In addition to this, women acquire more control over their lives and a measure of dignity while their marriage became more of a partnership

Studies have shown that in Africa, migration for women is mainly circular, in that migrants do not break away permanently from their places of origin. (Poir, 1979) They maintain contacts with their families and communities by correspondence or regular visits for important events such as Christmas and festivals. Relatives and friends are very influential in the migration process as sources of information from home. (Manu, 1999). They bring news of family and community news to migrants, who use the same channels to acquire land and property Migrants also maintain associational ties in their country of

sojourn through hometown and religious associations and make contributions to similar associations back home. Women are important in this role.

Through these associations, women abroad have maintained the culture and religious practice of the entire community. Women tend to find expression for their needs in religion, and are the main participants in churches abroad because of their special role and position in Ghanaian culture. They also play the role of family mediators and help to regenerate culture. They establish cooperative roles with their husbands, sharing power and decision-making, whereas their counterparts back home continue to become increasingly dependent on their husbands.

In Ghana, some unpublished studies suggest that female migrants are more likely to return and invest back home. This is also true for men who are married. In many cases, the wife returns with the children, to prepare the ground for the husband. This is because women tend to re-integrate more easily because of the long-term contacts they have maintained. They often find a way to reinsert themselves in petty trading or the informal business with the capital they have acquired. A significant number of women returnees move into self-employment and employ others, a potential strategy for poverty reduction and for stimulating private sector entrepreneurship. They have also been style setters and social interpreters for their contemporaries. Returning female migrants have become objects of emulation for the young and a source of pride for the old.

Peil (1995) notes that on the whole the effects of widespread migration appear to be positive for the individual migrants, their families and the country. A study of Ghanaian returnees found that more women than men had returned, and many reported multiple gains. Many thought they had benefited in living standards and experience, and that their extended families had gained financially, though they were not sure how this had benefited the country.

Unintended consequences and negative impacts of female migration

A sizeable literature links the process of migration to high levels of negative consequences. Rimmer, quoted in Peil, (1995), has observed that the loss of so much labour force in Ghana, particularly women may have led to negative growth in various sectors, particularly agriculture and healthcare.

Rural-urban migration has led to congestion in the cities and the creation of unhealthy urban slums with attendant reproductive and other health consequences. The rise of "kayayee" or girl street porters in Ghana in recent times has been particularly problematic. These are young girls, mostly school dropouts between the ages of 17-25. They sleep rough in the streets, practise prostitution by night, and are often exposed to sexual violence.

The advent of HIV/AIDS has made migration for survival an increasingly a risky enterprise. Given the circular nature of migration, a number of epidemiological studies have pointed to the link between migration and HIV (UNAIDS, 2005). In Ghana,

HIV/AIDS affects predominantly female populations, a high percentage within populations that have migrated. Migrant females are likely to be pushed into commercial sex as an easy entry point. On return, these migrants become a burden on their families and on already overstretched community.

"Brain drain" is a major problem for Ghana. In fact some research suggests that Ghana ranks first in out-migration of the highly skilled in Africa. The flow of nurses and teachers is overwhelmingly female, with serious consequences for our health care and education system. There is also research which reveals a significant amount of "brain waste" among women migrants, (Ho, 2004), as women drift to lower-skilled jobs, because of lack of skills, exploitation and discrimination. Women who were highly qualified as teachers or office managers clean hotel rooms and do menial jobs.

Trafficking is pervasive in West Africa, leading to exploitation and bonded labour. The movement of people from one destination to another, sometimes without knowledge and financial support, also creates conditions for unscrupulous persons to take advantage of them. Young men and women who move out of their homes in search of better opportunities are vulnerable to trafficking. It is a common practice for children supported by traffickers to cross borders after they have been pawned for money. Some end in bonded labour or prostitution. Border communities provide information and help facilitate the process out of ignorance.

Conclusion

The contribution of migrant women to development as well as socio-economic changes is indisputable. Female migration is an important phenomenon largely because of their numbers involved; their direct and indirect contributions to the economies of their countries of originand the impact of their activities on their families and larger communities. Through their occupational activities and their interpersonal relations, female migrants have consistently diffused innovations throughout Ghana and elsewhere. The most obvious area to which females have contributed to change is the marketplace.

However, these contributions are not adequately recognised and largely remain invisible. In addition, their needs and perhaps expectations as women and young women go largely unmet. Their sexual and reproductive health needs, their needs as rights holders with entitlements to, for example, safety, adequate housing and sanitation – particularly in the case of migrant traders and those in other unorganised sectors – are usually not high on the list of national priorities in their countries of origin. Female migrants remain vulnerable to poverty; illiteracy; poor working conditions; poor health and inequitable access to health care; HIV/AIDS and, in the case of porters and those who remain homeless, sexual exploitation.

The recent literature on female migration has called attention to the different experiences of males and females and the ways in which gender affects migrants. These dynamics have brought out changes in the perceptions and expectations of gender roles. There is a trend towards more egalitarian relations between men and women and the assertion of

women's autonomy. These modest changes in the gender relations in migrant communities are significant.

Policy considerations and recommendations

Overall, the impact of female migration in Ghana remains largely positive. Policies that affect female mobility must therefore be pursued to differentially influence opportunities for women. In Ghana, policy actions in the past have been scant on migration in general, but with the increasing departure of nurses awareness is emerging that such policies are necessary to ensure that women are treated fairly in terms of their access to employment and conditions of work. In this regard, accurate information about the determinants and consequences of migration of women is needed.

If both women and men are to benefit from the empowering and developmental potential of migration, a shift to a gendered human rights approach from the development perspective is needed. More research into the links between gender and migration and development would convince policymakers of the centrality of gender equality concerns.

Efforts must be made to provide women with better opportunities in the urban environment, by improving educational opportunities and skills to improve their income-earning prospects, as well as improved access to health. Given the high level of poverty in rural areas, programmes to improve the situation of rural women are highly desirable.

Despite the increasing pressure to migrate from developing countries and the demand for low-skilled labour in receiving countries, the management of migration has remained very much state-centred, particularly in receiving countries which focus on purely economic development, with little attention to the social consequences of migration in countries of origin. Sending countries appear no more sophisticated in their understanding of migrants' needs. As a result, negotiation of bilateral agreements places emphasis on the needs of developed countries: such policies have tended to channel women into illegal migration, often involving traffickers and smugglers. Policies must be pursued that encourage freer movement for women migrants in the labour market through regular channels, so that women are not forced into irregular migration.

The following additional recommendations are made to inform policy action of female migration:

- Gender-disaggregated data on migration and migration flows and reasons, with a view to enhancing understanding of migration as a female phenomenon;
- Research and documentation of the trends and patterns of women's vulnerability to sexual exploitation and violence.
- Establishment of a database that provides information on the determinants and consequences of internal migration to aid effective policy formulation.

- Focus on implementation of policies which target education, to improve the occupational opportunities and income-earning prospects of migrants;
- Improvements in migrants' access to health care and safety measures.
- Advocacy in host countries for policies sensitive to the needs of migrants such as work permits, health care and general wellbeing.
- Greater collaboration between stakeholders in migration related issues. The Ministry of the Interior in Ghana has set up a migration unit to coordinate migration in Ghana. It will be important for this unit to ensure cohesion in the work of the various agencies that address migration. As a first step, a stakeholders' forum should be convened to address these issues and develop a plan of action.
- A legal framework for enforcing conventions, covenants and laws, which protect the rights of migrants, particularly children and victims of trafficking.

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WOMEN FROM THE DIASPORA: THE EXAMPLE OF FILIPINO WOMEN IN ITALY

Filipino Women's Council (FWC)[1]
Rome, Italy[2]

Introduction

The feminisation of migration is a very visible characteristic of global migration trends in the last two decades. Records from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration show that 704,000 Filipino land-based workers went to abroad in search of better opportunities in 2004, and that 75 per cent of those were women. Today, among the estimated 500,000 Filipino migrant workers in Europe, 70 per cent are women.

Filipinos rank 13th in the official population registers of migrant communities in Italy. As of December 31, 2003, records of the Italian Ministry of Interior revealed a total of 74,030 legally residing Filipinos; in 2004 official records listed 46,906 or 63.5 per cent as women working as domestic helpers, caretakers and baby-sitters in big cities such as Rome, Milan, Turin, Naples, and Florence – the third biggest group of women migrant workers in Italy after the Ukrainians and the Romanians.

Many women leave the Philippines because of poverty and lack of opportunity. In Italy, they experience discrimination, labour exploitation and pressure from family separation. Some leave because they are risk-takers: enterprising, able to take initiatives, adjust to different situations, cope with difficulties, offer services that are appreciated, care for each other, and contribute to both Italian and Philippine society.

This paper focuses on the social role of Filipino women in Italian society as service workers, citizens and mothers, both in Italy and in the Philippines. It is based on a community research project that looked at different aspects of their situation, the consequences of their problems, their contribution to their families and societies, their goals and desires as well as the proposed solutions to their unmet needs. Details of the project can be found in the book *Me, Us and Them: Realities and Illusions of Filipina Domestic Workers* by Charito Basa and Rosalud Jing de la Rosa (2004).

The study: Me, Us and Them: Realities and Illusions of Filipina Domestic Workers

The project originated from a desire to respond to the pressing needs of Filipino women domestic workers in Rome. The objectives were: 1) to investigate Italians' perception and understanding about the role and contribution of Filipina domestic workers to Italian families and society, and at the same time understand how these women see their role and contribution to Italian families, their families back home and society at large; 2) to understand why these women decided to leave their families in the Philippines; find out if they recognize the impact of such separation on themselves and on their families, if they are ready to confront the situation, and how they would want to do it; and 3) to come up with strategies to address the problems identified in the research.

The research was inspired by two studies in Rome by Filipino researchers, Rachel Parrenas' *Servants of Globalization: Women Migration and Domestic Work* (2001) and Estrella and Augustus Anonuevo's *Coming Home: women, migration and reintegration* (2002). The Filipino Women's Council found it important to do a complementary study that documents and analyses the deeper issues that impact on the conditions of Filipina domestic workers.

This is the first hands-on experience by the FWC team of conducting community research. Filipino women migrants themselves were trained to conduct interviews and focus group discussions in six neighbourhoods of Rome. This process allowed the interviewers to nurture different perceptions and points of view in a non-threatening environment, enabling frank and open discussions among participants and interviewer. In addition, a small-scale exploratory study was conducted among 43 Italian employers selected to respond to general questions about their Filipino domestic workers. FWC validated the process by bringing the results back to the community who participated in the research, allowing further reflections on the part of both the community and the researchers and amplifying the scope of the analysis.

Findings

Focus groups

FWC researchers conducted focus group discussions in Rome among 42 participants, 94 per cent of whom originated from different provinces and rural areas in the Philippines; 50 per cent were high school graduates and 38 per cent held university diplomas. One-third of the participants were without children, and 40 per cent had children with them in Rome. This means that 60 per cent of women have a transnational relationship with their children.

The limitations to the domestic worker's situation were, in particular, their timid personalities and time constraints that made them uncomfortable in relating to their employers. Employers were curious about the Philippines in many respects, an openness that could be an entry point for a supportive relationship between the employer and the worker. The biggest barrier among domestic workers was their lack of ability to speak and understand the Italian language.

The factors that led to their decision to leave the Philippines and stay in Rome were the following: 1) there were no job options back home even for those with higher education; and 2) there was an urgent need to help the family to meet its obligations, especially sending their children to school. Employees had two main reasons for staying with their employers: 1) the experience of being economically independent; and 2) persisting relationship chains with relatives who helped them to work in Italy as domestic helpers.

Almost all of the participants wished to reunite with their families, especially the mothers who discussed their condition as distant mothers. Some said they would continue searching until they reached that "something" they were looking for, although it is not clear what it was they really wanted.

Interviews with Italian employers

The domestic helper enters the innermost part of Italian family life, carries out chores once done by housewives, and often takes care of children and older people. She would appear to belong fully to the dynamics of family life. However, this "intimate" relationship is more apparent than real: knowledge of the worker's life-story is often superficial and limited to general information, such as the age, place of origin and marital status of the domestic helper.

The majority of Italian employers interviewed had a positive view of the presence of Filipino migrants, assuming that they were domestic workers. The hypothesis of an unemployed migrant who was no longer "economically useful" induced a completely different reaction. The trust and esteem that employers expressed for Filipino women turned into mistrust and cynical indifference when the migrant faced the prospect of unemployment. As one interviewee put it, "They are welcome if they have a job, otherwise they start stealing." Positive attitudes towards migrants therefore depend on their usefulness to Italian society and their identification to specific roles, especially on those jobs that the Italians do not want to do.

Employers felt that Filipino migrants should integrate into Italian society, but only one interviewee suggested an integration strategy through cultural initiatives by the Filipino authorities in Italy. In all other cases, interviewees seemed to forget that the processes of integration involve two parties: the worker and the employer. The most recurrent answers involved inviting Filipino migrants not to remain closed in their community, but to become interested in the host country, to study Italian culture, to send their children to Italian schools and to improve their knowledge of the language.

The many facets of a Filipina domestic worker's life – the "life cycle approach"

Long separation of wives and husbands leads to serious estrangement between married couples. Women's work abroad has completely changed both family structure and gender roles, with accompanying problems in holding the family together. In practice, the Filipina transnational mother, working as a domestic helper, has now become the main breadwinner of her family, which has created dependency among family members. The study revealed that unless a woman is in a really bad personal situation – such as losing her job or work permit – or is afflicted by ill-health or old age, or the family is involved in some distress, such as losing a family member, she will continue as a transnational mother and domestic helper.

The current Italian policy on immigration has transformed the migrant worker from a person with rights to a simple member of a labour force. The residence permit has become the work permit, validity of which is dependent on a labour contract. In a market regulated by limited contracts, it is difficult for migrant workers to count on a long stay in Italy. The consequent insecurity forces many women to maintain their families in the country of origin.

A more complex scenario can arise from reunification of previously separated families, in particular, the issue of the second generation's integration in Italy. Offspring who join their parents in Italy as adults seem to be the most affected by changing family dynamics

vulnerable to estrangement. The validation results indicate that this is a growing problem for reunited families, especially those with teenage children who do not cope well with Italian education and peer pressure. Some parents recounted that their teenage children refused to study because of language difficulties, and were already working as domestic helpers even at their young age.

It is very rare for employers to allow a full migrant family to live with them. A very few courageous mothers, especially if the husbands are with them, undertake the struggle to raise kids born in Italy. As a rule mothers send their newborn babies to the Philippines because their work and conditions do not allow them to keep their children. Only a few are able to bring back their children to Italy at a young enough age to be well integrated in schools.

Conclusions

Barriers to integration

Unfamiliarity with the language is a big obstacle, making it difficult for migrants to find information and programmes that could help their integration in the host country. For women migrants, and for Filipinas specifically, female emancipation and equal opportunities for women in Italy becomes a new form of exploitation of women domestic helpers such as most Filipino women. The forces of globalization are presenting Filipino migrant women with dilemmas for which there are no ready-made answers. The problems are not just economic, social and legal, but also intercultural. A better understanding of the similarities and differences between the two cultures must go beyond the image of a good domestic helper.

Revisiting "economics" versus "values"

The majority of the respondents obviously put income as the main reason for coming to and staying in Italy. This materialism or consumerism which is very much part of the Filipino values, as it is for others, is the biggest challenge for those working in this field of migration. The Filipina domestic workers respond that money is necessary for basic needs; but there is evidence that they often feel that the money they send back is spent on unnecessary things, such as designer garments and jewellery. It is important to look at the values of other cultures which focus on achieving happiness even without material things.

Questioning instilled values (and religion) and reflecting on new ways of thinking

The traits that best describe the Filipino woman remain love for the family, love and care for children and for the elderly. The open-ended obligation they feel to support their extended families has pushed Filipina domestic workers to endless sacrifice, the result of which is dependency and laziness among the family members in the Philippines.

Recommendations

- Increased understanding of the gender dimension and the pervasive impact of a patriarchal society, which is increasing demand for domestic workers in the era of globalisation, empowerment and changing roles within households.

- Elimination of restrictive laws, and development by sending and receiving nations of gender-sensitive migration policies and programmes capable of providing an enabling environment and pathways as a means to guide women's choices.

- Support for economic empowerment of women migrants and access by women migrants to flexible labour markets.

- Development of appropriate and accelerated social inclusion programmes for the second and third generation of migrants, both women and men, who are at major risk.

- Building the capacity of migrant organizations for integration activities that will help them confront issues affecting migrants, such as rights and responsible citizenship.

- Access to training and funding, including micro-credit, to beneficiaries in order to eliminate dependency among recipients of remittances.

- Promote participation of migrant organizations in development projects to alleviate poverty in their countries of origin.

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[1] In May 1991, committed Filipino women migrants in Rome established the Filipino Women's Council (FWC) to support the social and psychological needs of Filipino women and their children in Rome. FWC opened the a shelter project for Filipino women that operated until 1994, and continues to provide many forms of counselling pertaining to employer-employee relations; marriage conflicts; violence including sexual and rape incidents; labour and other legal issues. FWC has organized several empowerment-training sessions in Rome, Siena, Florence and Turin for Filipinas and other migrant women of different origins. It has also participated in several international conferences and contributed to the drafting of important provisions concerning migrant women's rights and the proper recognition of women migrant workers' contributions. In 2003, FWC collaborated with the International Organization of Migration in Rome and other 21 institutional partners for an EQUAL-European Commission funded project entitled *The Image of Migrants in Italy through Media, Civil Society and the Labour Market.* This gave FWC the opportunity to conduct a historicl community action research as its contribution to the project, which led to the publication of a book, *Me, Us and Them: Realities and Illusions of Filipina Domestic Workers*. At the same time, FWC translated a Dutch-produced documentary film *The Care Chain* into Italian, in which most of the experiences depicted were lives of Filipina domestic workers in Rome. FWC can be reached at the following contact address: Casa Internationale delle Donne, Via della Lungara, 19 – 00186 Rome, Italy; E-mail: mindoro@tiscali.it

[2] Contributors to this Paper: Charito Basa, Rosalud de la Rosa, Annie Caalim, Marilou Berain, Dona Rose de la Cruz and Sabrina Cruz-Yu.

GENDER, REMITTANCES AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC[1]

Denise Paiewonsky
International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), Dominican Republic

The paper will briefly address three topics: 1) A short description of INSTRAW's new international research initiative on gender and remittances, of which this case study is part; 2) some background on the Dominican Republic's migratory history; and, 3) a summary of the study's methodology and some of its findings concerning the impact of remittances on the local economy, household dynamics and gender relations.

As the result of large scale emigration during the past four decades, over 10 per cent of the Dominican population currently lives abroad. Consequently, remittances play a major role at both the macroeconomic and the household level. More than half (52.2 per cent) of the total population living abroad is female, with a much higher proportion of women found in some of the receiving countries, particularly in Spain, where 85 per cent of current work permits have been granted to women.[2] However, as is often the case with studies on migration and remittances, little attention has been paid to the gender dimensions of the Dominican migratory processes, despite the well documented and widely acknowledged impact of gender relations on nearly every aspect of social and economic life. The gender perspective is particularly lacking in studies on remittances, the topic that has generally received the most attention in recent years.

The Dominican Republic is not alone in this respect. Insufficient attention paid to the myriad ways in which gender differentially affects the migratory experiences of men and women around the world has led INSTRAW to launch an international research project on the development potential of remittances from a gender perspective, involving case studies from a number of migrant-sending countries around the world. A common conceptual and methodological framework has been developed for this research initiative, of which the Dominican case study I will present today is the first field test. The Dominican study is in its final stage and will be published shortly; fieldwork has already begun on the Colombian case study and several other country studies are being prepared.

INSTRAW's international research initiative seeks to increase our understanding of the development impact of international migration through a gendered analysis of three broad topics:

1. The effect of gender relations in the sending patterns and use of remittances

2. The contribution of women migrants to the development of their countries of origin

3. The ways in which women's migration and remittances are affecting the gender roles and dynamics at both the household and the community level in the sending countries

Background: migration from the Dominican Republic

Dominican emigration began in the early 1960s and grew steadily through the late 70s, with the majority of migrants going to the United States (which still accounts for 73 per cent of all migrants). This initial period set the stage for the massive exodus which was to take place in the following two decades, particularly in the 1987-1995 period, when the transformation of the country's economic model (from the export of raw materials to a service economy based on free trade zones and tourism) and IMF-imposed structural adjustment programmes led to prolonged economic and social crises.

Two significant changes in migratory patterns took place in this second period: first, migrant destinations became more diversified, with increasing numbers travelling to Europe, particularly Spain, and, to a lesser degree to other destinations. Second, the migratory flow became increasingly feminised, especially in the new European destinations. The feminisation trend is evident in the case of Spain, where by 1992 women accounted for 82 per cent of the Dominican migrant population. Family reunification and the growing number of naturalisations, among other factors, have since reduced the proportion of women, which now stands at 61.4 per cent, of which 40 per cent work in the domestic sector (a much smaller percentage than a decade ago).

Remittances

In absolute terms and despite its relatively small population, the Dominican Republic is the tenth biggest recipient of remittances worldwide and the fourth in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Between 1994 and 2004 the volume of remittances quadrupled, increasing at an average annual rate of 12 per cent.[3] Current volume is estimated at US$2.7 billion annually. The importance of remittances at both the macroeconomic and the household level can be seen from the following:

- Remittances represent 13 per cent of the country's GDP, 47 per cent of exports from the free trade zones, 62 per cent of income from tourism, one to two times direct foreign investment, four times foreign portfolio investment, nearly 50 per cent of the country's total imports and almost double its non-FTZ exports, and approximately 20 per cent of disposable income.[4]

- The 2002 Dominican Census shows 10.2 per cent of households receive remittances. Compared to the national averages, these households show much higher percentages of extended families and of female-headed households. They also show higher rates of home ownership, better equipped homes, lower rates of illiteracy, and higher rates of secondary- and university-educated members.[5]

- Recent survey data shows that 60 per cent of remittances are spent on household consumption, 17 per cent on education, 10 per cent on savings and small-business investment, and 4 per cent on housing investment.[6]

The Dominican case study

Methodology: Both the methods and the samples used were chosen in accordance to the study's main objective, which was to obtain a better understanding of the gender

dynamics underlying the flow of remittances and the impact of women's new role as economic providers on household gender roles. As a result, fieldwork was carried out mainly in the south-western community of Vicente Noble and neighbouring villages, a location chosen because of the disproportionate number of female emigrants to Spain originating from that area. In fact, Vicente Noble is generally acknowledged as the starting point of Dominican migration to Spain in the late 1980s, and continues to play an important role in that regard.

Qualitative methods were used in data collection, including individual and group interviews, in-site observation, focus groups and interviews with key informants. In addition, a survey of small business (both recipients and non-recipients of remittances) was carried out, and a small sample of female family members remitting to village households was interviewed in Spain.

Study sample	*No. of cases*
Remittance-receiving households	18
Small business surveyed	31
Focus groups	2
Group interviews	2
Remittance senders in Spain	6

Findings. The study findings presented here are both preliminary (because data analysis is not fully concluded) and partial (because of time and space constraints). This presentation will focus on only three topics: 1) the effects of migration and remittances on household composition and family life; 2) economic and development impacts; 3) the impact on gender roles and relations. We begin, however, with a brief discussion of migratory and remittance-sending patterns.

In the late 1980s, when Vicente Noble was an isolated and economically backward rural village, a few women travelled to Spain to work in domestic service by way of contacts provided by Spanish nuns working in the region. Migratory chains were soon established and developed, and a massive exodus of village women took place in the following years. Because Spanish migratory policies favoured ex-colonies and allowed for rapid regularisation of migrants (particularly in the 1989-94 period), family reunification began shortly after and by the mid- to late 90s increasing numbers of husbands, sons and daughters were joining the original migrants in Spain.

The flow of remittances on a regular monthly basis began as soon as the new migrants established themselves in Spain, in amounts that were quite impressive by village standards. The fact that the majority of migrants worked as in-house domestic servants, and thus did not have to pay their own room and board, allowed a large proportion of earnings to be remitted. The study's household interviews show that the average monthly remittance is 50 per cent higher than the country's official monthly minimum wage, and one in four households report remittances more than double the minimum wage. In 70 per cent of sample households remittances represented the main (sometimes the sole) source of income; the remaining 30 per cent combine remittances with income from agricultural activities and, to a lesser degree, from informal economic activities, especially in commerce. Not a single case of salaried employment in the formal

economy was found in the household sample, where the most commonly reported activity category was "student". The reason for this will become clearer when we discuss household structure.

Women accounted for 85 per cent of recipients in the sample, with a similarly high proportion of women among the senders. The recipients are typically mothers, sisters and daughters of female migrants and, to a lesser degree, wives and children of migrant men. In the early years, the migrants tended to follow traditional authority patterns within the family and remit to their husbands or fathers. This pattern soon began to change, for several reasons: 1) it was reported that the men often used the monies for personal expenditures and neglected household needs; 2) a number of marriages broke up as a result of the wives' prolonged absence; 3) family reunification allowed for the husbands to join their wives in Spain. Nonetheless, the household sample shows that, regardless of the presence of adult men in the home, the reception and administration of remittances is overwhelmingly in the hands of women. This seems to be linked to the senders' priorities in terms of remittance use, which for the most part centre on household expenditures, children's education and housing investments. When remittances are used for small-business investments, men account for over one third of recipients.

Household structure and dynamics. Although average household size is five members, extended families prevail in almost all cases. Considerable variation was found in household composition, for example grandmothers caring for their migrant daughters' children, often sharing the home with one or more of the migrants' siblings and their children; sisters caring for their own and the migrant's children. A significant finding is that *one in four* households in the sample was headed by a returned female migrant, who had previously secured some form of replacement migration through family reunification. That is, after several years in Spain, the migrant was joined by a sister, daughter or son who took responsibility for providing the family remittances, thus allowing the original migrant to return.

Several other patterns were observed in these transnational households, for example: circular migration, in which migrants return to Vicente Noble for periods of several months or years and then go back to work in Spain; women migrants who have children in Spain and bring them back to their community to be cared for by a grandmother or other female relative; and full family reunification, whereby the complete nuclear family moves to Spain, in which case remittances often continue to be sent to grandmothers or other relatives. These female-headed transnational households reinforce family and social ties in a variety of ways, for example: by sending remittances to neighbours and friends to cover illnesses or other emergencies; by having their sisters, other relatives or friends move into their newly-built homes to care for them until their return; or by supporting family members who care for their children.

Economic impacts. The most visible impact of remittances is the transformation of Vicente Noble and neighbouring communities from dirt-poor rural villages to economically prosperous small towns, now fully provided with a variety of services such as electricity and sanitation, schools and health centres (both public and private), paved streets and roads, telephone and internet services, new homes and businesses. The construction of new, well-equipped, and often luxurious homes is the common goal of

all migrants, as they represent a safe economic investment, provide security for old age, and showcase the success of their migratory experience and new economic prosperity.

Nearby villages that have not participated in the migration experience illustrate the extent of Vicente Noble's transformation and provide a constant reminder of the many economic benefits of migration. In Vicente Noble hunger and malnutrition have virtually disappeared, infant mortality has decreased substantially, more children attend secondary school and even university. Two decades ago the majority of homes in Vicente Noble had mud walls and thatched roofs. Now such structures have virtually disappeared, replaced by middle-class urban homes with many modern amenities. The town is bustling with new businesses of all kinds, including supermarkets, internet cafes, pharmacies, furniture and clothing stores, auto sales, communications centres, remittance and travel agencies, and a variety of construction-related businesses such as hardware stores, brick and ceramics factories, and carpentry shops. The 2002 census registered 16,700 people, several times the original population, to which must be added the estimated 7,000 migrants now living abroad.[7]

It is worth noting that: 1) the majority of new businesses have not been started with remittance money, but mostly by outside merchants who have taken advantage of the town's economic prosperity; 2) agriculture, formerly the main economic sector, has not benefited from remittance-related investment but has instead showed a steady decline.

Impact on gender roles and relations. As can be seen by the analysis of household composition and dynamics, migrant women have become the main, and often the sole economic providers of their households. Given that most remittance money is sent to female relatives, there is no doubt that migration has profoundly altered gender roles and power relations within the sample households. These changes are not, however, clear and unambiguous, as traditional gender ideologies seem to persist in many respects. For instance, several women spoke of the fact that economically independent women need husbands at their side for the sake of "decency" and "honour", and even to provide security from theft and other abuses. Likewise the personal autonomy of women migrants, who can choose to separate from their husbands or start new relationships in Spain, may lead to questions about their "morality".

More significant is the persistent notion that the integrity and emotional well-being of the family is the women's sole responsibility, and that, by breaking up the family unit, migrant women are responsible for the many social ills that affect their "abandoned" children, such as teenage pregnancy, drug use, school failures and fatherlessness. The case study does not provide enough data to evaluate how much of the discourse on adolescent misbehaviour reflects real social ills, or rather the staying power of traditional "family values" and gender roles. It is clear, in any case, that the vast majority of interviewees do not perceive a transnationalisation of family life to be taking place but rather the destruction of traditional families, and thus blame migrant women for the break-up of their marriages and the supposed or real misbehaviour of their children.

The criticisms of migrant women's morality and perceived failure as mothers coexist with enthusiastic acknowledgement of their economic success and admiration for their role as economic providers to their families. The fact that most adolescents participating in the focus groups[8] have no greater ambition than to follow in the migrants' footsteps

suggests that perhaps the younger generations have a more positive assessment of the migrant women's roles and achievements.

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[1] The Dominican case study presented today was funded entirely by UNFPA, whose kind support we wish to acknowledge.
[2] *Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano, República Dominicana 2005*. Oficina de Desarrollo Humano, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, Santo Domingo.
[3] Suki, Lenora. 2004. *Financial Institutions and the Remittances Market in the Dominican Republic.* Center for Globalization and Sustainable Development, The Earth Institute at Columbia University, New York
[4] See notes 2 and 3.
[5] See note 2
[6] Bendixen and associates. 2004. *Remittances and the Dominican Republic: Survey of Recipients in the Dominican Republic, Survey of Senders in the United States*.
[7] This is the estimate provided by municipal authorities; other informants estimate much larger numbers.
[8] One focus group involved high school students whose parents live in the DR; the other students whose parents live abroad.

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5. WHAT HAPPENS TO FEMALE MIGRANTS IN THEIR COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION?

FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin
International Labour Organization (ILO), International Migration Programme

Introduction

The present paper provides information on the sectoral and occupational concentration of women migrant workers, their distribution on the skills ladder and their working conditions. The paper touches on other major issues concerning women migrant workers, such as brain waste; the recognition of diplomas; provision of educational opportunities and vocational training; discrimination in the labour market at several levels, and the relative lack of avenues for regular labour migration for women.

The paper ends with some ILO recommendations to improve legal, labour and social protection for women migrant workers in both countries of origin and countries of destination.

Women migrants' concentration by economic sector

While men migrate to a variety of economic sectors, female migrant workers are mainly concentrated in the **services sector**. Relatively few women migrant workers are found in the **agricultural sector**: however, the search for cheap and docile labour in agriculture has lately encouraged the hiring of women migrant workers to replace male migrants for labour-intensive tasks in several industrialised countries.

In the **industrial sector**, migrants' insertion in manufacturing includes women as much as men. The main manufacturing sub-sector is the textile and garment industry where migrant workers are paid low rates because of low productivity and stiff competition, and get the worst jobs. Some employers are migrants themselves and employ people from the same areas of origin. As it is difficult for labour inspectors even to locate these sweatshops, irregular employment remains important.

Lastly, the percentage of women migrants working in **mining and construction** is relatively insignificant worldwide.

Women migrant workers by occupational segregation

Female labour migration is concentrated in a few female-dominated occupations associated with traditional gender roles. Labour market segmentation and stereotypes define the demand for women migrant workers: demand is increasing mainly for care services in less-skilled and devalued jobs such as domestic work including home cleaning and child care, and in skilled and valued occupations such as nurses, and private institutional health care workers for the elderly and the handicapped. Women migrant workers also hold jobs as contract and hotel cleaners; waitresses; entertainers, and sex workers. Women migrant workers are also found in retail sales, and in labour-intensive manufacturing, mainly in sweatshops.

Retail trade in the informal economy is an important niche for the women migrant workers in some South-east Asian and Central American countries.

Personal services: household employment or domestic work is a major source of employment for documented as well as undocumented women migrant workers. Domestic work is the single most important category of employment for women migrants in countries that permit temporary legal entry of workers: Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, as well as the Gulf States, Jordan and Lebanon. However, domestic work is not socially valued and many (mainly Western European) countries do not consider it as valid for the allocation of a residence and work permit. The fact of working in a household makes it difficult for undocumented women migrants to supply proof of employment and benefit from regularization schemes.

Still, many women migrant workers acquire legal status for domestic sector jobs once they find work. Greece, Italy and Spain have regularized a large number of women foreign workers concentrated in the domestic sector. Moreover, in some instances, work permits provided under these regularization schemes consider workers temporary and do not permit them to bring in family members. In other cases, applying for family reunification to bring in spouses and children is difficult because of their labour market position and greater difficulty in accumulating the necessary income and access to housing.[1]

Nursing and other Health Care Services- According to Public Services International (PSI), a significant number of nurses and other health professionals are migrating overseas in search of better terms and conditions of work or increased professional development opportunities. PSI particularly registered a dramatic growth in the level of international recruitment of nurses to Canada, the UK and the US. For example, they mentioned that nearly half of newly registered nurses in the UK in 2001-2002 came from countries outside the UK including the Philippines, India and South Africa, and that the National Health Service in England estimated in 2004 having a shortage of more than 20,000 nurses. Nursing shortages in countries of destination, in addition to other factors such as higher wages, drive this migration and are providing women with opportunities for regular migration either temporarily or permanently.[2]

While this is welcome as one of the only legal channels of migration open mainly to women, PSI recognizes that this migration may possibly have adverse effects on the quality of health care in countries of origin which themselves have nursing shortages. For this reason, some countries have established codes of practice to discourage the targeted recruitment of health workers from countries experiencing shortages.[3]

Enterprise cleaning services; hotels, restaurants and catering; tourism- In 2000, in the United States of America, 28.4 per cent of all hotel workers were immigrants. Compared to U.S. workers, they were younger, had less formal education, were more likely to be women and less likely to be white.[4] In Italy, they account for the employment of 13-18 per cent of the migrants who are hired yearly with a contract (bars, hotels and restaurants alone account for 7-9 per cent). In metropolitan areas the proportion is even higher. Most jobs in these occupations are not registered. For example, a large number of undocumented Chinese migrants work in Chinese-owned restaurants in Italy and Spain. Many Latin Americans also work in small hotels and restaurants without a regular labour contract, but even with one their working conditions are considerably worse than those of their local counterparts: short-term contracts without opportunity of renewal; low wages; long working hours, and unskilled and physically demanding jobs.

Community services: advocacy, mediation, inter-cultural specialists, home language instruction and translation have enabled women to do other jobs than low level service jobs. These occupations have permitted women migrants to become social workers and provide teaching services in integration programmes offered to their own communities.

Sex work It is estimated that 80 per cent of trafficked victims are involved in sex work and that the European Union had between 200,000 to 500,000 women migrants working undocumented as sex workers by the year 2000. Trafficking is a labour migration issue of major concern. The number of young women trafficked clandestinely across borders involves severe exploitation, deception, coercion and brutality, and continues to grow. Victims of trafficking are particularly vulnerable to exploitation because of their inability to speak the local language and their irregular status in a foreign country. This type of forced migration is successfully handled by unscrupulous middlemen that serve as job brokers and convince young girls of a better life in the West.

Distribution on the skills ladder

Female foreign labour at the highly-skilled level represents only a minority, though their number has been increasing during the past decades. They are normally employees of transnational companies or international institutions in IT-related occupations or in other highly specialised professions such as doctors. Worldwide a smaller proportion of women migrate into highly-skilled sectors than men. One of the main reasons is that women's education tends to be concentrated in the humanities and social disciplines that qualify them for professions such as teaching, health and social work. While opportunities are opening in these areas because of industrialized countries' ageing workforce, they are still largely closed to migrants from developing countries. In the year 2004 in OECD countries, to a larger extent than men, foreign women employed in science and technology sectors represented only a very small proportion of foreign women employed: only 12 per cent of "green card" permits in Germany in 2000 were given to women.

At the next level of the skills ladder, skilled foreign women employed in education in relation to the total number of foreign women employed increased only slightly from 1994 to 2004 in Belgium, Germany and France, while it strongly diminished in the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy.[5] Indeed, the representation of women migrant workers in the professional and skilled categories is limited except for teachers and nurses.

As with male migrant workers, the large majority of women migrant workers are single, aged 20 to 40, with at least a high-school education, and occupy low-skilled jobs. Domestic services, healthcare and social services in OECD countries accounted for a growing proportion of women in the foreign labour force. In most countries of destination women migrant workers are predominantly undocumented and concentrated in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations such as domestic work, small manufacturing sweatshops, catering and low-level urban services. Indeed, the closure of European Union labour markets to third country nationals with professional qualifications (with a few exceptions) has meant that for many women, the only way they could find work was either in the domestic sector or other low-skilled level service jobs.[6] The demand for women migrant workers in unskilled occupations, in particular those going into domestic service, is often high and sustained since they represent a form of "replacement mobility" for female nationals who are freed from their household and care responsibilities to take up other positions in the labour market.[7]

Working conditions and lack of protection

The most frequently encountered issues regarding women migrant workers' working conditions are low remuneration, heavy workloads with long working hours, limited training facilities, poor career development, and in some countries lack of freedom of movement, as well as recorded abuses. Their jobs are usually low on the occupational ladder. The best example is domestic work where, because of the highly personal relationship with their employers, psychological, physical and sexual abuse is common. In some countries, women migrants are required to work unpaid overtime, their wages are withheld and they do not enjoy weekly rests.

Women migrant workers' jobs, even less than men's, are usually not covered or inadequately covered by labour legislation or other social security or welfare provisions. The best example is domestic work.

According to Vega Ruiz, the fact that domestic work takes place within the household determines its exclusion from the ambit of labour law.[8] Domestic work is done in households (not considered as workplaces) of private persons (not considered employers) that cannot be supervised by labour inspectors. Domestic workers' employment situation does not fit the general framework of existing employment laws so their working conditions remain, in essence, unregulated. In fact, not only do some countries not consider household helpers or domestic workers as workers and exclude them from protection under their national labour codes, but do not provide them with optional protection under any other national law.

Brain waste and recognition of diplomas

Many migrant workers, especially women, sacrifice themselves in occupations for which they are overqualified. Some of them possess university degrees or professional qualifications as architects, doctors or accountants. A large number of these women migrant workers enter domestic work and have a difficult time, especially if they are undocumented, climbing the occupational ladder.

One of the main reasons why there is so much "brain waste" is the lack of legal opportunities for labour migrants and the lack of a system of mutual recognition of diplomas between major countries of origin and countries of destination. Indeed, the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad is one of the main areas in which significant changes to national policy and practice are necessary to ensure that regular migrant workers can access employment on equal terms with national workers. However, states have not advanced a lot in this area, either unilaterally or in co-operation with others. Only few seem to be doing work on the subject.

One of the other important areas where work needs to be done is on promotion of vocational training and retraining opportunities for migrant workers. For example, domestic workers interested in climbing the occupational ladder should be given the opportunity to be trained as health assistants and qualified health care workers so that they can work in private nursing homes and homes for the elderly, where they can earn more pay, and enjoy better working conditions and social security protection.

Fewer existing avenues for regular labour migration for women

Although there is insufficient research on this point, evidence indicates that shrinking opportunities for legitimate employment in countries of origin have affected women disproportionately to men and acted as a further push factor in women's migration. Notwithstanding the large number of women workers migrating on their own, women are under-represented in the legal inflows of migrants into most industrialised countries. Since legal recruitment efforts continue to target highly-skilled male-dominated occupations such as IT workers and temporary migrant workers' schemes comprising semi-skilled and unskilled workers for male-dominated occupations such as construction or agriculture, women's opportunities to migrate legally continue to be more limited than those of men, especially to industrialised countries.[9] Indeed, legal, official recruitment efforts frequently open doors only to male-dominated occupations. Migration policies are not openly biased by sex: however, in some countries restrictions have been imposed on admission of migrants for female-dominated occupations.

As a result, large numbers of undocumented women migrant workers moving independently live separated from their families for many years because of the nature of employment that is available to them such as personal services, which do not usually provide a work and residence permit. This family separation may create lasting socio-psychological problems in parents and children.

Discrimination in the labour market

Most countries still need to address issues such as gender discrimination and inequalities among women migrant workers. For best results, such policies should recognize the similarities and differences in the migration experiences of different categories of women and men, and should aim at eradicating all forms of discrimination and gender inequality, as well as tackling other vulnerabilities, violations and their consequences.

The following levels of discrimination have been identified in the case of women migrant workers:

- *Gender:* as women workers vis-à-vis men workers;
- *Nationality:* as foreign workers vis-à-vis nationals;
- *Migration status:* undocumented vis-à-vis documented;
- *Occupation:* performing jobs where they are not considered workers;
- *Wages:* performing jobs where the principle of equal pay for equal work is not applied;
- *Racial and ethnic:* the principle of equal opportunities is frequently not applied to members of ethnic or racial groups.

As a result, one of the most important strategies supported by trade unions worldwide is pay equity between migrant and national workers, as one of the most powerful ways to improve terms and conditions of work in both sending and receiving countries.

Conclusions and recommendations

In order to provide a larger protection to all migrant workers in general, and in particular to women migrant workers, ILO has identified some areas of intervention where legal, labour and social protection could be improved in countries of origin as well as in countries of destination:

Countries of origin

1. Creating a single and effective system of information on jobs abroad, making sure that an equal number of jobs for women migrants are included;
2. Strengthening monitoring of job recruitment agencies and other agencies providing information on jobs abroad;
3. Ensuring that the migrant worker has signed a contract before leaving the country;
4. Creating a registry with a database including a copy of the contract; the full address of the recruitment agency; the name of the recruitment agent; the full address of the employer and other useful information in case of grievance;
5. Providing useful pre-departure information on whom to contact in case of urgent need; legal rights and other useful information, for example on cultural differences.
6. Providing enough labour attachés in consulates or embassies in countries of destination to deal with complaints and urgent needs of national workers abroad.
7. Negotiating with countries of destination the establishment of institutions such as the one mentioned on point 4 below.
8. Negotiating labour exchange bilateral agreements as well as social security bilateral agreements with main countries of destination.

Countries of destination

1. Recognizing the labour market demand for female workers' jobs accompanied by opening legal channels of migration for women workers, and establishing labour migration agreements, including a 50 per cent quota for women;
2. Providing legal protection in occupations where women migrant workers are concentrated: amending and enforcing laws and regulations covering the rights of women migrant workers and enforcing prosecution in the case of recruitment agents and employers or sponsors who violate their contractual obligations and commit abuses. Countries could introduce flexibility in changing sponsors without the risk of imprisonment and deportation in cases of workers complaining of abuses, and offer lawyers' services free of charge;
3. Establishing a commission of Government authorities, concerned Embassies, IGOs, NGOs and other international and national bodies, to discuss, identify and find solutions to migrant workers' (especially domestic workers') issues of concern;
4. Creating a national institution to monitor the treatment of migrant workers, in general, and of women migrant workers in particular by recruitment agents and sponsors;
5. Creating a registry with a database including a copy of the contract; the full address of the recruitment agency; the name of the recruitment agent; the full address of the employer and other useful information in case of grievance;
6. Strengthening labour inspection or providing monitoring through social services;
7. Regularizing workers that have been in the labour market for a number of years;

8. Recognizing diplomas and qualifications;
9. Providing re-skilling and training for women providing opportunities to climb the occupational ladder;
10. Diversifying employment opportunities for women migrants;
11. Promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment among women migrants;
12. Adopting a new approach to family-linked migration;
13. Recognizing the social value of female-dominated occupations such as domestic work;
14. Undertaking awareness-raising campaigns aiming at changing practices such as withholding passports, withholding of wages, and physical, sexual and psychological abuses;
15. Adopting measures to ensure that all migrant workers are directly paid 100 per cent of their wages on a regular basis; that they have the freedom to dispose of their wages as they wish, and that all wages are paid upon termination of employment;
16. Ensuring that social security systems provide the necessary protection to migrant workers and that social security bilateral agreements are signed with migrant workers' main countries of origin.

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[1] Kofman, Eleonore, *Women Migrants in the European Union*, Paris, OECD, Paper presented at the conference "The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration" organised jointly by the European Commission and the OECD, January 2003, p.2.

[2] Public Services International *An Introductory Guide to International Migration in the Health Sector for Workers and Trade Unionists*, Ferney Voltaire, 2003, p.3.

[3] Public Services International, , p.2.

[4] Working for America Institute: *Hotel Jobs Update*, 2002.

[5] Oso-Casa, Laura and Garson, Jean-Pierre, *The Feminisation of International Migration,* Paris, OECD, p.13. Paper presented at the seminar "Migrant Women and the Labour Market: Diversity and Challenges", Brussels, 26-27 September, 2005.

[6] Kofman, Eleonore, *Women Migrants in the European Union*, Paris, OECD, p.5. Paper presented at the conference "The Economic and Social Aspects of Migration" organised jointly by the European Commission and the OECD, January 2003.

[7] ILO, *Preventing Discrimination, Exploitation and Abuse of Women Migrant Workers, An Information Guide,* Booklet 1 Introduction: Why the Focus on Women International Migrant Workers, Gender Promotion Programme, Geneva, p. 29.

[8] Vega-Ruiz, María Luz, *La relación laboral al servicio del hogar familiar en América Latina*, Montevideo, ILO, RELASUR, 1994, p.35.

[9] An exception to this rule are Gulf States, Lebanon, and Jordan, plus Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan where domestic work has been recognised to be in demand in the local labour market.

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HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WOMEN AND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION MECHANISMS

Jillyanne Redpath
Senior Legal Officer
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Migrant women who do not fall into the category of highly skilled workers, or are employed in the lower-skilled sectors of the host economy, often find that there is little legal regulation or enforcement of their rights, and that protection of their interests is dependent upon the good will of their employer – particularly if their status in the country is irregular. For many women, migration is a successful, empowering experience. Yet the sad reality for others is one of gross exploitation and abuse.

This paper considers: (a) whether international legal instruments applicable to migration adequately protect the rights of migrant women; and (b) protection mechanisms at the international level overseeing respect for the rights of migrant women.

Human rights of migrant women: the instruments

It is often noted that migrant women face a dual vulnerability; both as migrants and as women. There is no one comprehensive international instrument governing the rights of migrants, nor of migrant women. This does not mean that they are not protected; indeed, all the core human rights treaties respond to the needs of migrant women, particularly the bodies of rights applicable to women, to migrants, and to workers.

The most obvious starting point in a discussion of human rights and migrant women is the International Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (MWC).[1] The MWC is the most comprehensive human rights instrument dealing with migration. As the name suggests it is applicable to both migrant workers *and* members of their families, and addresses the whole migration process; departure, transit, host country and return.

The MWC is explicitly applicable to migrants in both regular and irregular situations. The MWC is based on the human rights outlined in the other six core human rights treaties, and enunciates them in a way relevant to the special needs of migrants. In a short paper it is possible to highlight only a handful of the rights contained in the MWC, which comprises some 93 articles. As regards irregular and regular migrant workers, it *inter alia* reaffirms the principle of non-discrimination; reaffirms migrants' right to respect for their cultural identity; requires treatment not less favourable than nationals in relation to remuneration and conditions of employment; provides for effective protection by the state from violence and intimidation, and affirms migrants' right to diplomatic protection. In relation to migrants in a regular situation the MWC *inter alia* provides for equal treatment with nationals in the work

place, education and training, health care and social services. It requires states to take measures they deem appropriate to facilitate the reunification of migrant workers with their families. On death or dissolution of marriage it requires states to give favourable consideration to permitting family members of the migrant worker to remain in the host country.

The MWC is a large step forward in the protection of migrant workers generally and addresses a range of their needs. It responds to a number of the challenges faced by migrant women during the migration process. However, although it makes all rights provided applicable to migrant men and women; *it does not directly address the specific needs of migrant women*. Other core human rights treaties do, in particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Also of relevance is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic Cultural and Social Rights.

Space constraints permit highlighting only those norms most pertinent to this discussion, but it is important to remember that the rights enunciated in these instruments are applicable to all human beings, nationals and non-nationals, men and women,[2] alike. Each of these instruments contains non-discrimination clauses on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. In addition, these instruments enunciate the right to freedom from slavery, from torture, and inhumane and degrading treatment – rights that are very relevant to migrant women in the context of trafficking and smuggling. A number of rights are relevant to the workplace, including equal remuneration for men and women for equal work. When these human rights instruments are read together, it is clear that international law affords adequate protection to migrant women.

Among other international instruments of importance to women migrants is the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime (the Protocol). The Protocol is not a human rights instrument, but requires states to take a number of measures that indirectly promote the rights of migrant women. For example, the Protocol calls upon states to establish trafficking in human beings and involvement in the process, as a criminal offence and mandates a number of measures by states to prevent and combat it, both unilaterally and in cooperation with others[3]. In the context of actual victim protection, the Protocol requires States, "to the extent possible under domestic law", to protect the privacy and identity of the individual, and in "appropriate cases" to provide assistance in court proceedings. In addition, the Protocol requires states to "consider implementing" measures to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims through the provision of appropriate housing; counselling and medical services; psychological and material assistance; and employment, training and educational opportunities.

While the language regarding victim protection is somewhat equivocal, the Article 14 saving clause is worthy of note. The clause provides that nothing in the Protocol affects the rights, obligations and responsibilities of states under international humanitarian law, human rights law and, where applicable, refugee law. Thus, although the protection mechanisms for victims of trafficking outlined in the Protocol

are not mandatory, it nevertheless clearly recognizes the persisting human rights obligations of states in respect of migrant women.

A review of the international instruments shows that they provide ample protection for the rights of migrant women. The challenge lies in their implementation at the national level, particularly in regard to migrant women in an irregular situation. Indeed, the effectiveness of international standards protecting the rights of migrant women is only as good as the domestic legislation, policy and practices implementing them. Effective protection requires political will at the national level.

Human rights of migrant women: international protection mechanisms

A number of protection mechanisms at the international level promote respect for the rights of migrant women. They can be divided into: (a) treaty-based mechanisms; and (b) charter-based mechanisms.

(a) Treaty-based mechanisms

The Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, and the MWC each establish treaty bodies, or Committees, to oversee implementation of the respective treaties. The mechanisms available under each of these treaties include state reporting requirements and individual complaint mechanisms.

Under each of the human rights treaties discussed, states parties are required to report every three to five years on the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures they have taken to give effect to the respective treaties. In each case, the Committee examines the report and invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to submit comments, thus helping to ensure that an "honest" picture of the country situation is captured. The outcome of the procedure is "Concluding observations and recommendations" in which the Committee provides advice to the government on how implementation of the Convention could be improved. Whilst the state reporting process is just beginning under the MWC, the Committee established under the Optional Protocol to CEDAW has made a number of recommendations relevant to migrant women[4].

The individual complaints mechanism is another way in which states can be held accountable for their treaty obligations. Under this mechanism, individuals or groups who believe their human rights under the treaty in question have been violated can lodge a "communication" about a violation to the treaty body. The state party against whom the complaint is made is then required to submit to the Committee written explanations or statements clarifying the matter, and the remedy, if any, that the state may have taken. On receipt of the response, the Committee considers both complaint and response and issues a decision thereon. Such complaints can only be lodged if, *inter alia,* the state in question is a party to the treaty and has accepted the individual complaint mechanism, and if the individual has exhausted all available domestic remedies regarding the alleged breach. To date no state party has agreed to the use of the mechanism, but the possibility remains.

(b) Charter-based mechanisms

A number of protection mechanisms deriving from the UN Charter also exist which are relevant to promoting the rights of migrant women. One such mechanism is the Special Rapporteur. The Commission on Human Rights and ECOSOC have each appointed Special Rapporteurs; but most relevant to migrant women are the Special Rapporteurs on Violence against Women; on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children; and on the Human Rights of Migrants. This paper focuses on the third of these mandates.

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants was created in 1999 (Resolution 1999/44) at which time the Commission on Human Rights requested her to "examine ways and means to overcome the obstacles existing to the full and effective protection of the human rights of migrants, including obstacles and difficulties for the return of migrants who are undocumented or in an irregular situation." The Special Rapporteur's functions are to: (a) request and receive information from all relevant sources, including migrants themselves, on violations of the human rights of migrants and their families; (b) formulate appropriate recommendations to prevent and remedy violations of the human rights of migrants, wherever they may occur; (c) promote the effective application of relevant international norms and standards on the issue; (d) recommend actions and measures applicable at the national, regional and international levels to eliminate violations of the human rights of migrants; (e) take into account a gender perspective when requesting and analyzing information, as well as to give special attention to the occurrence of multiple discrimination and violence against migrant women.

The Special Rapporteur achieves these objectives through conducting country visits (so far to Canada, Ecuador, Philippines, Mexico, Spain, Morocco, Iran, Italy and Peru), receiving individual petitions, and reporting to the Commission on Human Rights. In addition, the Special Rapporteur has produced a number of reports highlighting the specific vulnerabilities of migrant women. These include reports on the situation of migrant workers and violence against them, unaccompanied minors and irregular migration (E/CN.4/2002/94) and on the human rights of migrant domestic workers (E/CN.4/2004/76). Each of the reports contains a number of recommendations to governments relevant to migrant women. Like the reports of the treaty bodies outlined above, the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur are non-binding. Nevertheless, they play a vital role in bringing the human rights issues faced by migrant women to the attention of the international community.

While these international protection mechanisms play an important role in upholding the rights of migrant women, they cannot replace effective mechanisms at the national level.

In conclusion, some general points fundamental to ensuring and promoting respect for the rights of migrant women are listed below. While they are not exhaustive, they facilitate accountability of states in the respect of their human rights obligations and the empowerment of migrant women. In addition, they contribute to ensuring that the migration process is a positive experience for the countries of origin and destination, and for the migrant herself.

- First and most important, states should ratify relevant international instruments, and incorporate rights and obligations there under into domestic law.

- In addition, states should put mechanisms in place to ensure enforcement of legislation, including independent monitoring.

- Those enforcing domestic law, as well as the migrant women themselves, should be aware of the rights and obligations of migrant women. This requires adequate dissemination of information by countries of origin and destination on the rights and obligations of migrant women, as well as adequate training for officials.

- Migrant women's right to consular protection and assistance of should be known both by officials of the receiving countries, and by the migrant women themselves. Countries of origin should strengthening consular protection and assistance, to afford better protection for the rights of its nationals abroad.

- Inter-governmental organizations and civil society have key roles in working with governments and migrant women to achieve protection of migrants' rights, and respect for their obligations. This should be encouraged and further cooperation developed.

- Countries of origin and destination should collect, analyse and disseminate gender-disaggregated statistics on migration so that policies affecting migrant women may be responsive to realities. Similarly, there is a need for mainstreaming gender issues into migration and related policies.

- Finally, global, regional and bilateral cooperation forums play a key role in raising awareness of the needs of migrant women and for coordinated responses from countries of origin, destination and transit.

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[1] Space constraints permit a discussion of only the Migrant Workers Convention. It should be noted however that the ILO Conventions No. 97 of 1949 concerning Migration for Employment (Revised) and No. 143 of 1975 concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers contain provisions relevant to the protection of the rights of migrant women.

[2] With the exception of CEDAW which, as the name suggests, focuses on the rights of women.

[3] Such measures include information exchange and training of relevant officials, strengthening border controls, and the security of travel or identity documents.

[4] The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is currently drafting a General Recommendation (No.27) on Women Voluntary Migrants.

6. WHAT ARE THE RISKS FACED BY FEMALE MIGRANTS?

FEMALE MIGRANTS, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, HIV/AIDS AND THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

Dr Manuel Carballo
Executive Director
International Centre for Migration and Health
Geneva, Switzerland

Issues

Accelerating migration

The pace, magnitude and scope of human migration within and between countries is accelerating in most parts of the world. UN estimates place the number of people living outside their place of birth at around 195 million, but the number of people on the move, including refugees and internally displaced people, rural-urban migrants, seasonal workers and clandestine migrants is much greater.

Migration factors

As ever, a mix of socio-economic and political factors is fuelling migration. Many of the UN's Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction are unlikely to be met in the near future and the gap between rich and poor people and rich and poor countries in terms of human security is widening rather than decreasing. Political instability and conflicts of various kinds and intensity are also becoming more frequent and are forcing millions of people to seek safety across as well as within national borders. Contemporary migration is meanwhile being stimulated by an international media system that idealizes "how the other half lives" and promotes the belief that life is better and possible elsewhere. The speed and efficiency of modern transportation is also making it possible for people to travel or to be moved over vast distances more quickly than ever before.

Changing labour demand

The demand for migrant labour in the recent past was often driven by the need for primarily male, cheap, and relatively unskilled labour in construction, mining and heavy industries. The picture has changed considerably and now it increasingly includes hotel and domestic work and other light industries where the demand is for female labour.

This changing pattern of demand is emerging against a backdrop of hardening attitudes and policies on migration and migrants. As a result of these changes, migration is beginning to outpace the willingness or capacity of many countries to allocate official status to all the people arriving or wanting to arrive. The result is that more and more

people are moving unofficially. Most are moving of their own volition and by their own means, but many others are paying large sums of money to be smuggled across borders. Once they arrive they are often forced to devote a large proportion of their income to repaying smugglers and others who have "helped" them. There is also evidence of a growing industry of trafficking, mostly involving women who are forced into sex work or situations that carry a high risk of sexual abuse and exploitation (Horbaty et al, 2006).

Impact of policies and attitudes

As migration policies become more restrictive, the opportunities for families to migrate as units are becoming fewer. The physical and psychosocial toll on the people who leave and the families they leave behind are increasing the psychosocial, if not the physical, health risks associated with migration. Hardening attitudes to migrants by receiving countries may also be adding to the risks migrants face in respect of their quality of life as newcomers, their social acceptance and capacity to integrate.

Migration and health

Migration is invariably stressful. It inevitably involves uprooting, leaving close relatives and social networks behind, and moving into situations where there is little occupational or indeed any other type of guaranteed security. Migrants also carry with them health profiles that reflect their medical histories, the quality of health care that was available to them in their countries of origin, and the ways they have adapted to their circumstances. Their health is also defined by the working and living conditions they move into on arrival in new countries. To date national and local health authorities have given little attention to the health of migrants, and where they have done so, they have chosen to focus more on the infectious diseases migrants might bring with them. Health policymakers have seldom addressed any of the family and reproductive health issues surrounding migration and migrants.

Access to care

Access to health care is a constant challenge for migrants and refugees. Even when access is to healthcare services is possible n principle, other obstacles intervene. Sometimes these include how migrants perceive the services and the health-care personnel staffing them. In many cases they involve unfounded beliefs about what is and is not really available to them and what the healthcare personnel are willing to "share" with them (Carballo et al 2004). Problems of language and communication, as well as different cultural attitudes to health and health care are also ever –present challenges. For refugees, internally displaced persons and others who are forced to flee because of natural disasters the problem is often one of general scarcity of services.

Contraception and migrant background

Use of contraception by migrants is highly variable. As it does in most settings, it varies in part according to the socio-economic background of the person and his/her knowledge about child spacing and contraception. On the whole, however, migrants often appear to be unaware of the family planning services that are available in host countries and they are far less likely to access those services than nationals (Spycher and Sieber, 2001; Carballo et al, 2004). Decision-making on family planning issues, including contraception is also influenced by cultural factors and in many cases women are afraid of how other migrants, as well as their families, will perceive them if they are seen attending family planning clinics (Fellous, 1981). Misunderstandings about the impact of contraception also abound especially where there are no outreach services in the migrant's language or provided by people from within the migrant community (Fontana and Beran, 1995).

Requests for abortion

While requests for abortion are falling in many parts of Europe, and especially in countries such as Denmark, Finland, and Italy (Henshaw et al., 1999), requests from migrant women continue to be consistently high and suggest that abortion is often the primary perceived option to unwanted pregnancy. In Italy there is also evidence that the rate of spontaneous abortion may be higher in foreign groups than in the national population (Medda et al, 2002).

Maternal health and pregnancy outcome

The health of pregnant migrant women and pregnancy outcomes is becoming a major concern in Western Europe. Indicators such as pregnancy complications, low birth weight, peri-natal distress, caesarean delivery, and poor post-natal follow-up suggest that pregnancy in some migrant settings is especially poor. Some of the problems may be linked to the pre-migration health status of women, but the circumstances characterising migration and "re-settlement" may also be having an adverse effect. For even when socioeconomic and educational background factors are controlled for, migrant women seem to be less likely to seek or receive adequate antenatal care. This is especially so where their legal status is unclear, and when migrants feel that local policies and social attitudes towards them are hostile (Carballo et al. 2004).

Sexually transmitted infections

The question whether migration constitutes a risk for sexually transmitted infections has assumed importance in light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and fears that migrants might carry the infection with them. As with other health problems associated faced by

migrants, however, it is the often the social situations migrants are forced into and the ways they cope with them that may be exposing them to sexually transmitted infections of all kinds (Carballo, Divino and Zeric 1996, Suligoi & Giuliani 1997, Del Amo et al. 2002, Koppenaal et al., 2003, Matteelli 2003). In the UK an increase in HIV in some migrant groups has also drawn attention to the complex nature of sexual decision-making among some groups of female African migrants and the social constraints surrounding them in the communities they live in.

Gynaecological issues

A number of studies suggest that migrant women do not use gynaecological care services in the same way, and to the same extent as nationals do. They also suggest that that many migrant women suffer unduly as a result of this because when they do consult healthcare personnel their gynaecological problems are often at a late stage of development (Newell et al. 1998, Holk et al.; 2000, Norredam et al. 1999).

Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation is a cause of serious psychological trauma (WHO 1997) and is associated with physical problems such as haemorrhage, severe abdominal pain, urinary retention, tetanus, enhanced risk of infections, infertility, obstructed labour, and chronic depression. FGM is now becoming a matter of concern in Western European countries that receive migrants from countries where the practice is common. Some studies have referred to the presence of gynaecological problems associated with FGM among migrants living in France (Gallard 1995), Italy (Bonessio et al. 1996) and the UK (Cameron & Anderson 1998). In Sweden, however, where concerns have also been expressed no direct link has been found between the high rates of perinatal mortality among babies born to migrant women from the Horn of Africa and FGM; nor has obstructed or prolonged labour caused by the scar tissue of circumcision been linked with perinatal mortality (Essén et al.; 2002).

Migration and gender-based violence

Gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation is a major concern in the context of female migration. Typically seen as a problem of forced migration, sexual abuse and exploitation is nevertheless common wherever women move alone. In conflict situations, where women tend to flee with children and elderly relatives, sexual violence, abuse and exploitation is common and refugee camps appear to offer little protection. In the former Yugoslavia an estimated 40,000 Bosnian women were raped (Carballo, Smajkic and Zeric 1996) and in Rwanda as many as 200,000-300,000 women were raped. Recent reports on the condition of refugees and internally displaced people in Sierra Leone, DRC

and Liberia indicate that even military personnel assigned to protecting refugees are often involved in sexual abuse, including rape. Violence against women is not limited to conflict settings, however. The recent Tsunami was a reminder that displacement in natural disasters also appears to open the door to gender based violence (Carballo 2006) and there is growing evidence that most migration situations in which women lack personal power and self-esteem violence and abuse is common (Menjivar & Salcido 2002).

Forced marriage

The practice of arranged marriages is not uncommon in migrant communities in Western Europe. In Norway between 1996 and 2001, 82% of Norwegian daughters of Moroccan immigrants who married, did so to Moroccan citizens and it is thought that many of these were arranged unions. In the case of Pakistani immigrants, the rate was 76% and in general the prevalence in Norway of "fetching marriages" increased between 1996 and 2001 (Bawer 2003). Arranged or forced marriages can be a major source of psychosocial suffering for girls who grow up seeing their non-migrant peers going through very different lifestyles. In the case of the very high suicide rates reported among adolescent South Asian girls in the UK (Carballo, Divino and Zeric 1996) it has been suggested that fear of arranged or forced marriages may be an important factor.

Human rights

Migration has always had a tendency to erode human rights, and in one way or another migrants always tend to lose, if only for a period of time, some of their civil and human rights. As they move from one setting to another, often in the absence of formal protection, they can be easily abused economically and sexually. Migrants often cease to be the responsibility of their countries of origin well before they ever become truly recognized and taken in the countries they move into. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of irregular migrants, who remain invisible if not avoided and uncared for by host societies. Irregular migrants are not the only ones to suffer, however. Migrants in general tend to lose many of their rights in a marketplace that increasingly sees migrants first as labour units and only then as individuals with special needs and rights.

Discussion

The numbers of long or short-term migrants and the geographic extent and cultural scope of migration are growing and doing so rapidly. Poverty, inequality, and the need to seek economic and political security are becoming more forceful push factors. The demand for cheap labour in receiving countries, together with a growing global media-driven culture that offers the promise of opportunities elsewhere is also driving migration. Conflicts and

political instability are meanwhile pushing many people from their homes and forcing them to move within and across borders in search of safe havens.

Migration is always a risky process that affects the health and welfare of the people who move and those they leave behind. The circumstances under which people migrate, the conditions in which they move into receiving societies, and the legal context surrounding their move are all critical to their health and well being.

Evidence that migration can adversely affect the reproductive health of migrants is growing. Both women and men are at risk, but for social and biological reasons, women are at greater risk of adverse outcomes than men are. The growing number of women migrants worldwide and the fact that a large proportion of all women migrants are moving alone make this an issue of great concern.

Gender based violence and sexual abuse have become features of the conflict-related forced migration of women, but in recent years trafficking has become an international industry that also threatens the human rights and reproductive health of women. Meanwhile the women and men who are forced to pay large sums of money in order to be "helped" across borders as illegal migrants also move into situations replete with opportunities for sexual abuse and exploitation by employers and others.

Access to health care services is a perennial problem of migrants and poor health and healthcare has become a frequent feature of labour migration and the life of migrant workers. The reasons behind this are many and complex. They include the pre-existing health status of migrants, cultural differences in how health and the need for healthcare is perceived, and poor knowledge about what services may be available and how to use them. In addition, however, ignorance and indifference by employers and healthcare systems to the unique health and welfare needs of migrants remain major obstacles to better health.

As a result, high levels of unwanted pregnancies and requests for abortion, poor maternal health, high rates of pregnancy and delivery-related-complications are common in many receiving countries. So are poor pregnancy outcomes such as low birth-weight babies and pre-term delivery. To what extent the social and economic conditions surrounding migration may also be affecting sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS is not clear, but many women migrants appear to find themselves in situations in which they are unable to negotiate ways in which they could avoid exposure to infection.

That little has been said about these problems in the past is a testimony to the benign neglect that has surrounded the topic of migration. Migrants are increasingly being seen as essential to economic development but not as people to be integrated in host societies. And while refugees are often seen as more legitimate and needing of care, they too are encountering new barriers to social insertion and integration. As long as situations such

as these persist, the risks for the reproductive health of women and men will continue to grow. If they do, the human rights of everyone will suffer too.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND TRAFFICKING OF YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

Ana Revenco
President, International Women Rights Protection Center "La Strada"
Moldova

This paper will share some findings related to violence against women and how it is linked to the phenomena of female migration and trafficking in women. It is not a research study, but rather an observation resulting from five years of experience as an NGO in Moldova working on the front-line against trafficking, and being on a daily basis in contact with women willing to migrate, as well as with women who have suffered the trafficking experience. The information will build on existing knowledge and experience and help create policies that will increase the benefits of migration for women and reduce their vulnerability.

Introduction

To analyse to what extent violence against women is a risk factor for migrant trafficked women, it is important first that we all understand, share and apply a single definition of violence against women. In this regard I would like to refer to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of violence against women, General Assembly Resolution 48/104 as of December 20 1993 according to which "Violence against women means any acts of gender-based violence that results in or likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".

Applying this definition in practice, we discover that violence against women has unfortunately become a constant feature of our lives. It happens in both rural and urban localities; it happens regardless of social class, level of education or age group, and it happens within even long-standing relationships, even after years of marriage. Data on domestic violence against women (2005) collected by the Institute of Marketing and Social Studies of Moldova show that:

- 32 per cent of women are subject to psychological violence in families;
- 18 per cent - to physical violence and abuse;
- 4 per cent - to sexual violence;
- 9 per cent – to economic violence; and
- 21 per cent to social violence.

What are the causes of violence? Although I mentioned earlier that violence does not have very specific and self-determined factors, according to the IMS, in Moldova domestic violence mostly happens as a result of a combination of the following factors:

- Poverty – victims of domestic violence come from families with very low income.

- Alcoholism – victims come from families where consumption of liquor is frequent.
- Unemployment – victims come from families where at least one family member is unemployed.
- Exposure to violence from childhood – typically victims come from families where parents are in permanent conflict.

In 2005, the Ministry of Interior registered 3085 claims on domestic violence. At the same time, it is widely believed that this is only the tip of the iceberg. Most cases of violence against women, especially within the family, remain unreported, largely because the victims themselves are reluctant to come forward. This reluctance stems from a mentality which says that the secret must be kept within the family, or that obedience to one's husband is still an obligation. If the man decided to act like this it is because the woman disobeyed him.

Violence against women as a push factor for trafficking

Violence against women has become one of the most important push factors for trafficking, along with poverty, unemployment and lack of opportunity. Interviewing victims of trafficking, we discovered that 80 per cent were constantly and commonly subject to violence before their trafficking experience. The monitoring of victims proves that running away or escaping from a violent environment was a more serious ground for the victim to leave the country than the desire to become financially stronger or independent. For this reason, victims' perception of the risks and dangers of illegal migration and trafficking is very low or even zero. They would often say, "I thought that anywhere would be better than here," or, "What could happen to me that would be worse?" La Strada's statistics, based on direct work with beneficiaries show that:

- 45 per cent of victims have been subject to physical and mental abuse within the family; among children, 64 per cent;
- 3 per cent have been subject to sexual abuse at home; among children, 2 per cent;
- 13 per cent have been subject to sexual abuse outside the family; among children 12 per cent

Most often, such violence and abuse against women and girls happened in families with permanent conflict between parents (31 per cent) as well as violence between parents (29 per cent).

Violence against women as a tool for manipulation and control in trafficking

For most of its victims, the experience of trafficking is associated only with violence and abuse, because human trafficking and violence are strongly interconnected, and because *violence and abuse are used against victims of trafficking as a tool for manipulation and control*.

Traffickers apply violence to make women do what they want; to suppress any attempts to escape or seek help from law enforcement; and to intimidate other victims and make them obey the criminals. Data show that in over 60 per cent of trafficking victims have been

subject to physical and sexual violence. They have been deprived of food and water, locked up for days, severely beaten and raped. The trafficking experience involves unwanted pregnancy as well as forced abortion.

Victims of trafficking are also subject to psychological violence and manipulation involving threats of death, or turning them over to the police: "They will be much worse than we are. They will deport you and the whole family will know you were a prostitute." Traffickers may threaten harm to family and people close to victims. They are not allowed to contact their families or the outside world in general. They are forced to consume alcohol and drugs. Acts of violence may be followed by acts of mercy, so that the victim loses any sense of orientation or control. Her values and perception of life change. The trafficker or manager might be seen as a friend or protector.

Traffickers may use such methods of manipulation and control towards any victims of trafficking, irrespective of their age or the purpose of trafficking. Victims of trafficking face multiple health problems starting with post-traumatic stress disorder, and including gynecological, dental, orthopedic, and other physical disorders.

Violence against women as an obstacle to reintegration

The organizations providing support to trafficked persons recognise that the human factor has a very strong impact on the rehabilitation and reintegration of trafficking victims. Whatever assistance package or infrastructure may be available, *if the victim is not accepted into the society or is treated as a shame to the community, nothing can help her regain dignity and control over her life*.

Violence and abuse on return is a very powerful obstacle to reintegration. This conclusion is backed up by the results of monitoring victims, according to which victims frequently face the following situations:

- Over 80 per cent of victims are rejected by families. They are turned out of their homes; their children are kept away from them; they are not recognized as daughters by their parents, or they are subject to physical and mental abuse.
- Over 70 per cent of victims are rejected by the community. Children are not allowed to play with the children of victims; the community brutalizes the victims using abusive language; victims have no access to church or community social infrastructure, or they are sexually harassed and even raped by men of the community.
- Over 70 per cent of victims have limited access to adequate assistance. Victims are blackmailed out of their benefits. They are often humiliated when trying to claim their rights in courts or social assistance offices, and are generally not recognized as persons whose rights have been violated.

In September 2005, La Strada conducted research on public attitudes towards victims. One out of three respondents considered the victim responsible for what happened to her or him, Suggestions for help would be only: "I would advise her to change her behaviour."

Conclusions and recommendations

Experience and data both show that violence against women accompanies trafficked women before, during and after their traumatizing experience. It has an absolute long-term negative impact over her capacity to be a full person and citizen. *Action to combat violence must be incorporated in any anti-trafficking action plan*. Similarly, reducing the vulnerability of migrant women must be among the key points when developing migration policies; Continuing research and documentation of the trends and patterns of vulnerability of women to violence are imperative. Countries of origin and destinations at all levels must act to prevent violence against women migrants, as part of action against human trafficking.

Countries of origin

- Research and document trends and patterns on women's vulnerability to violence.
- Secure consolidated national legal framework with regard to violence against women.
- Implement capacity-building programmes for professionals dealing with violence against women including police, judges and social workers.
- Carry out awareness programmes to empower women, break the stereotypes, remove the issue of violence against women from the list of "taboo issues" and thus ensure access of victims of violence to justice, and increase of women's access to health and social infrastructure.
- Carry out awareness and educational campaigns for young people and parents on non-violent life styles and cultivating tolerance and gender equality among young people.
- Implement witness protection programmes, including change of residence and identity.
- Secure long-term assistance programmes for victims including their families and children.

Host countries

- Consider physical and psychological violence against women and trafficked persons as a significant indicator in the victim identification procedure.
- Adopt non-repatriation policies for victims of trafficking, especially in cases with increased risks of return; secure full and mandatory application of risk assessment procedures with participation of professionals from host and origin countries.
- Adopt policies sensitive to the needs and interests of victims, such as work permits, access to health and social care, and support for education and vocational training.
- Eliminate restrictive laws and policies with respect to labour migration; develop gender-sensitive migration policies to create an environment enabling women to make choices responsive to their needs.
- Strengthen economic empowerment of women migrants and facilitate access of women to flexible labour markets.

7. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FEMALE MIGRANTS RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN?

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY RETURNED FEMALE MIGRANTS

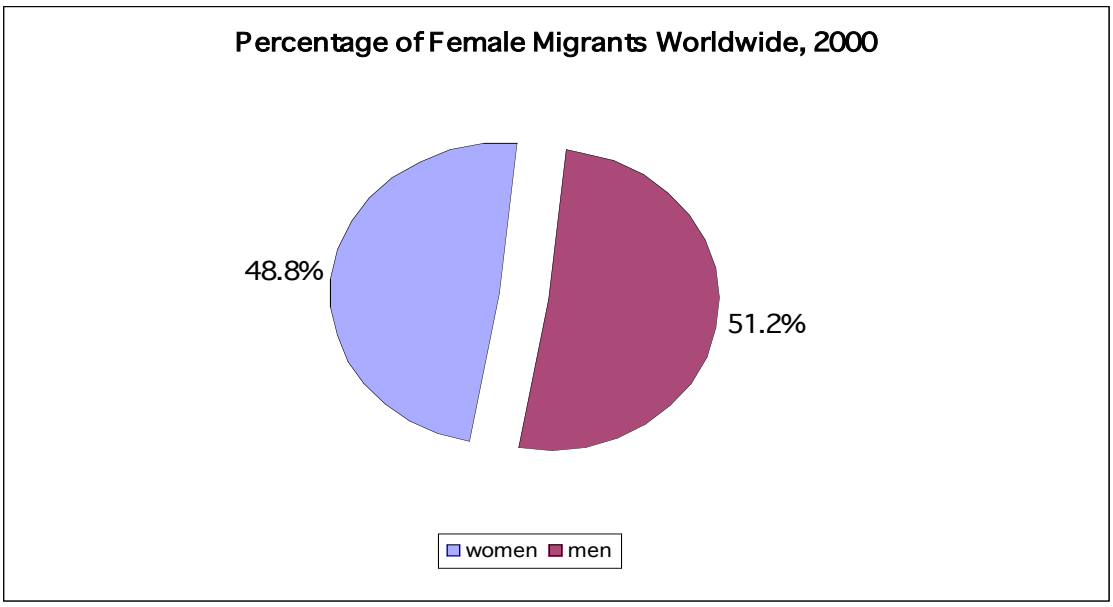
Fred O. Oladeinde, President
The Foundation for Democracy in Africa
Washington, D.C.

Introduction

The Foundation for Democracy in Africa serves as the secretariat for the Western Hemisphere African Diaspora Network, an initiative of the African Union, established in December 2002 during the historic First African Union Western Hemisphere Diaspora Forum — an outreach by the AU to the growing population of Africans in the Diaspora in its efforts to link migration with development in Africa.

According to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the term "migrant worker" refers to "a person who is to be engaged, is engaged, or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national."

The 2004 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development shows that about 90 million women currently live outside their countries of origin, almost half of the world's international migrants. This study also shows that female migrants make significant contributions economically, socially, politically, and in other ways to both their country of origin and their country of destination, usually at great personal cost.

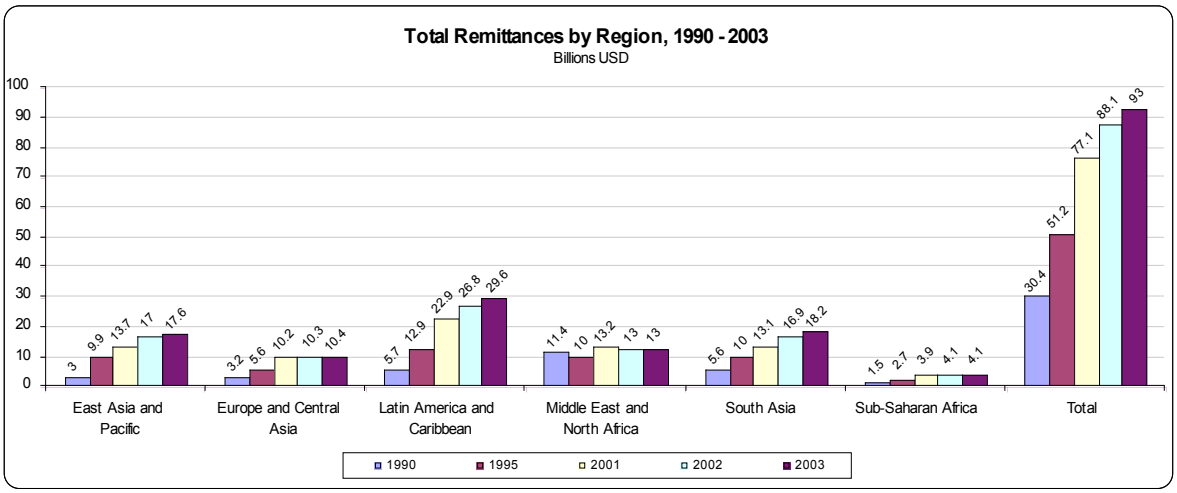


Source: Zlatnik, Hania. "The Global Dimensions of Female Migration." Migration Policy Institute, 2003.

Poverty and the inability to earn or produce enough to support oneself or a family are major reasons behind the movement of work-seekers from one State to another. War, civil strife, insecurity or persecution arising from racial, ethnic, religion and other discrimination also contribute significantly. Upon returning to their countries of origin female migrants typically encounter some of the same circumstances that caused them to migrate initially.

Remittances are among the methods used by female migrants to make economic contributions to their countries of origin. Reviewing the high level of remittances, migration can be seen as a means by which households can diversify risk and accumulate the capital needed for productive investment. This is particularly important for female migrants because of the opportunities to earn better salaries abroad than at home.

This paper will focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by returned female migrants.



Source: International Monetary Fund, and World Bank, Global Monitoring Report 2004: policies and actions for achieving the MDGs and related outcomes. (Washington, D.C., 2004)

Female migrants returning to their countries of origin fall into the following categories:

Voluntary return to country of origin – migrants who return to their country of origin voluntarily, either temporarily or permanently;

Forced return or arbitrary expulsion to country of origin – migrants who are forced to return to their country of origin because of cancellation of employment contracts or deportation because of legal problems; and

Refugee resettlement after conflict or civil war – individuals who return home after fleeing because of natural disaster, conflict, or social, religious or political persecution.

Voluntary return

Highly-skilled female professionals who return voluntarily to their country of origin, either temporarily or permanently, are important to national development because they bring experience and skills obtained while working in their destination countries. This "brain gain" of skilled professional female migrants can have a positive impact on economic growth and development when countries of origin are in need of their specific skills and facilitate their reintegration.

Similarly, non-professional and unskilled labour migrants returning home can, with proper guidance and services, be successfully reintegrated through gainful employment and the, establishment of small and medium enterprises, where they can use skills acquired abroad to support themselves and their family.

Female migrants returning home voluntarily should use their time abroad as a unique opportunity to plan and prepare for reintegration into their country of origin. Their tangible assets and the skills acquired in their destination countries should be harnessed to advance the professional development of the returning migrants and the development of the community as a whole.

In order for these female migrants to maximize their opportunities when they return to their countries of origin, non-governmental organizations, and where available private and public sector organizations should assist them with reintegration. In addition, their respective governments must establish and provide support mechanisms where none exist to assist in in such services as:

- Housing
- Banking services
- Employment
- Establishment of own business (self-employment)
- Development of schools for children
- Health care
- Social interactions and networking
- Cultural adaptation, where necessary, particularly for foreign born siblings
- Political and civic participation
- Transportation

Forced return or arbitrary expulsion to country of origin

Female migrants who are forced to leave the country of destination seldom have the opportunity to plan properly for their return to their country of origin. The circumstances include termination of employment contracts or problems with the law leading to deportation, sometimes after incarceration or detention. The resulting disruption of their work and family life upon return to their country of origin may sometimes make them desperate to go back immediately, through legal or illegal channels.

Despite their professional skill and experience this group often face serious challenges. Without family support at the destination country and country of origin, these experiences may leave the returning female migrants destitute. This group will need the support of the country of origin, non-governmental and faith-based organizations, UN agencies and family members to fully recover and become productive participants in their country of origin, so that they can contribute to development using their acquired skills and experiences from their destination country.

For female returning migrants who have been victims of human traffickers and transnational organized crime, forced return to country of origin may bring years of suffering and oppression to an end, and a chance to re-unite with family and friends. Forced-return female migrants also need the same guidance services and assistance mentioned for voluntary return female migrants, often to a greater degree.

Refugee resettlement

There are 17.1 million people who have been forced to leave their homes conflict, repression, human rights violations, or political instability, among other hardships. While refugees have a special status in international law under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, they often return to homes that are racked with political instability, the presence of landmines and the destruction of the economy and infrastructure, even if a peace agreement has been signed.

The conditions of most returning female refugees continue to be very challenging, and opportunities for gainful employment very weak or non existent. Most returning refugees depend on humanitarian support because of high unemployment, limited social services, weak infrastructure and limited law enforcement capabilities.

Recommendations:

1. Governments of both receiving and originating countries should establish bi-lateral frameworks for female migrant exchanges to discourage illegal migration, punish traffickers, and provide safety and stability to the process of migration.
2. Governments of both destination and origin countries should ratify all UN conventions on the rights of migrants and refugees.
3. NGOs, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations in both countries of origin and destination should provide guidance services for female migrant workers on:

    - Work contracts;
    - Immigration laws;
    - Public recruitment services for those who want to remigrate, to prevent undocumented migration;

- Money management;
- Labour rights;
- Remittances;
- Savings and investment;
- Reproductive health;
- Social welfare for children and family members;
- Developing a database of returned migrants, including their profile to assist in monitoring their development after return.

4. Hometown associations, diaspora networks and other groups should be encouraged and supported by donors to assist female migrants in the following areas:

    - Skills development;
    - Social investment/women's networking;
    - Small medium enterprise development in country of origin;
    - Establishment of credit unions, saving clubs, microfinance to advance female migrants financial viability;
    - Counselling for social and psychological problems;
    - Information on civic and political activities.

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8. GOOD PRACTICES IN ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF FEMALE MIGRANTS

GOOD PRACTICES IN ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE MIGRANTS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO FEMALE MIGRANTS – SOME EXAMPLES FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Peter Schatzer, Director
Regional Office for the Mediterranean
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Rome, Italy

Within IOM's structure of regional offices, the mission in Rome covers 16 countries South and North of the Mediterranean: from Turkey to Portugal, from Libya to Mauritania, including the island States of Malta and Cyprus. The programmes managed by the nine offices in the region span a wide range, from development to humanitarian, from research to medical services, from facilitation of regular migration for labour to preventing and combating trafficking as well as helping the victims of this crime.

Gender-disaggregated data on migration for the whole region covered by the Rome office are not easy to come by. While national data from Southern Europe are available and the SOPEMI report presents data for both female and male migrants, North African data are weak. Even the Mediterranean Migration Report 2005, issued by the European University Institute in Florence and funded by the European Union, makes little reference to this theme.

Only in recent times have countries north of the Mediterranean such as Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain or Turkey, themselves sending countries for many decades, become affected by large-scale immigration. In addition, the number of source countries is large and growing.

It is safe to assume that most migration in the Mediterranean region is in search of work. There is widespread gender stereotyping for certain types of jobs for migrants. The Filipino maid or the Egyptian pizza-cook exemplify this. Much of the immigration to Southern Europe is characterized by this phenomenon.

The gender distribution among immigrant groups varies widely. Overall, the sexes are well balanced, but certain nationalities have highly skewed profiles. Taking the example of Greece, Arab countries in particular send almost exclusively male migrants, and many Asian countries (with the exception of the Philippines) also tend in this direction. Syria and Egypt have 80 per cent male presence in Greece, Albania and Romania 60 per cent while the migrants from Ukraine and Moldova are at around 70 per cent female.

The situation at the southern Mediterranean shores too is gradually changing in similar terms: Maghreb countries that have seen themselves until very recently as source countries, preoccupied with the protection of the rights of their migrants in Europe, have also become transit and destination countries with all the related challenges – but often without the necessary means, economic and legal, at their disposal to deal with these issues. The growing concern about security related to migration influences many policy choices.

At this rather early stage of the development of immigrant societies, where the arrival, presence and role of migrants is the subject of an often animated political debate, migration-related gender issues are only now emerging as an agenda item.

This should not be understood as lack of need to address some pressing concerns. Where migrants in general are presented as threats to indigenous competitors in the labour market or even as a potential security risk, female migrants run the risk of double or multiple discriminations.

The new freedom of movement and the break-up of traditional structures in Central and Eastern Europe has also given women and even children the possibility to move abroad in search of a better economic future. While many succeed, others who may be particularly vulnerable because of lack of knowledge of the language, culture and structure of destination societies. end up in slave-like situations, falling prey to traffickers.

All these circumstances offer a wide space for concrete activities to educate migrants, potential migrants, and their host societies, and to address at least some of the most obvious and blatant violations of migrants' human rights.

This presentation intends to share some of the approaches that IOM has taken in the Mediterranean region in order to address certain of these concerns.

The image of migrants

Taking into account the new immigration-country status of Italy, IOM, the Caritas Rome/Statistical Immigration Dossier and the Archive of Immigration have joined efforts aiming at preventing and combating discriminations, exclusions and inequalities in the labour market and civil society in general. The project was part of the EU EQUAL Initiative, Round 1, managed by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

In addition to the three promoting organizations, the partnership included 19 other partners: RAI (Italian State Television); the research institute Censis; the Intercultural Centre of the city of Turin, the Centre for Intercultural Education of the Province of Mantua; the immigrants' associations Abusuan, Baobab, Bota Shqiptare, Capoverde Women in Italy, Filipina Women's Council and NODI-Our Rights, the NGOs COSPE and UCSEI; the training institutions Forema, Padova, CEFAL-Bologna, ENFAP-Pescara, ESCLA-Matera, and IRSEA-Bari; the company Ergon Sistemi. The project also had a

European dimension through the transnational partnership developed with Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK.

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the improvement of the perception of migrants in Italy, to enhance their presence and to foster their social integration and labour insertion. Through direct involvement of active players in social services and the media, from both Italian national and migrant communities, this action had the ultimate goal of contributing to counteract racist and xenophobic attitudes. The specific aims of the project were the following:

- Promote more balanced and correct information on the presence of migrants, which on one hand takes into account a more and more diversified Italian audience and on the other counteracts stereotyping processes or ethnicization of crime in media information.
- Promote better knowledge, perception and self-representation of migrant communities in Italy, in order to foster more consistent integration between migrants and Italian citizens, and between nationals and new minorities.
- Improve social and work-related integration of migrants and enhance the quality and access of public services for migrants through sensitization and training. Provide social workers and employment personnel with specific reference material to be used in their daily work with migrants.

Relying on the partners' network and specific competencies, the project aimed at making an impact on the whole of Italy. An interactive approach at several crucial levels was part of the strategy to construct and promote a positive representation of immigration in Italy.

1. *Communication and information strategies* This intervention was based on the collection of data and comparative analysis of recent research on the image of migrants through media, carried out in Italy and in other EU countries, which resulted in the publication of a white book. Specific actions followed: training of immigrant journalists; support to information media in migrant communities; and development of sensitisation material. The aim was to encourage the adoption of strategies aimed at a positive representation of the new cultural diversity. These actions involved active players at national and local level. Two innovative initiatives, meant to be sustainable over time, will be the main results of the intervention:
   - The establishment of a foreign communities information agency, MIGRA, still available on the internet), and
   - The establishment of an immigrant communities' national archive, which is meant to preserve the identity of all those who have undergone the difficult path of integration in often diffident, up to hostile, realities.
2. *Sensitisation activities* A series of events was organized throughout Italy, at which manuals, reports and materials produced by all partners were made available. Events included public meetings, conferences, cultural events,

exhibitions, reviews, and broadcasts. Relying on the support of immigrant experts, Caritas organized sensitisation events, seminars and debates in collaboration with local authorities, entrepreneurs, unions associations, employment services and ecclesiastic institutions.

3. *Intercultural orientation* This intervention was based on qualitative research in nine Italian provinces where partners were located. The aim of the research was to highlight the dynamics of the relation between Italian service providers and migrant citizens, and to develop specific programmes of sensitisation and intercultural orientation. According to the problems and needs identified on the ground, pilot training courses were carried out and manuals provided to employment services, local bodies, schools, health services and others who serve immigrants. In fact, Social workers such as civil servants, teachers, doctors, nurses and administrators who are in daily touch with migrants can help prevent discrimination.

Each of the three lines of intervention envisaged the use of innovative tools and actions (the video *"Sogni di Donna"* is one example), supported by applied research components.

Combating trafficking

Trafficking in human beings has to be addressed in the broader framework of rebalancing the macroeconomic gaps which characterize globalisation. For instance, lack of opportunity and high unemployment in countries of origin push individuals to areas where there is demand for their labour. These push factors conspire to create an atmosphere that lowers prospective migrants' defences, making them overlook potential risks and see only the possibility for improving their circumstances and maybe providing for the family. Traffickers, mindful of market mechanisms and the local social climate, seize the occasion to match demand with seemingly unlimited supply.

Effective action against trafficking must take many different aspects into consideration. In this respect, interventions aimed at direct assistance to victims, through providing shelter and rehabilitation aimed at social and labour reinsertion, are combined with measures to enhance local capacities to detect and prosecute criminal activities.

In this area, IOM Rome has paid particular attention to women's empowerment. However, capacity-building cannot be fully effective unless accompanied by prevention. In this respect, prevention is often confused with information. Information is crucial and is the logical foundation for prevention activities: information raises awareness among the general public. But it cannot modify behaviour. The goal is not only to acknowledge the existence of the problem but to provoke a change in attitude from indifference towards self-protection and protection for others. It means involving the whole community in a process of reconsidering, and perhaps modifying social values.

Among crucial social values is a more balanced relationship between genders. The core issue of trafficking is not sexuality but rather the relationship of genders and inequality in women's access to labour market for.

Following changes in the economic and social structures of Central and Eastern Europe over the past 15 years and the upheavals in the Balkans, women and children have become more exposed to traffickers. At the same time, administrations were not ready to deal with trafficking in a way consistent with international law.

The recognition and promotion of the rights of trafficking victims, and of women generally, is the core issue in preventing trafficking. Without rights, slavery will continue to haunt the dreams of a better chance for the future. IOM Rome has been pursuing this strategy throughout its projects, focusing on different aspects of the trafficking phenomenon: trafficking prevention; capacity building of law enforcement, judiciary and NGOs, and victims' return and reintegration.

Counter-trafficking work in Italy

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is mostly directed at young women, although the number of cases where young males are being exploited is growing. There is also growing concern about trafficking for work.

Raising awareness of children and young people on trafficking and related issues, with the general objective of preventing trafficking in persons in the Balkans, is thus the focus of IOM's work in the region. Working with ministries of education to develop the national capacity to train teachers to teach trafficking prevention in schools is among the aims of a regional project for the Balkans. Because of the particular vulnerability to trafficking of children who do not attend school or drop out early, it also focuses on building national capacity to teach trafficking prevention to children who do not attend school

The project strategy is inspired by principles set forth in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons; the Brussels Declaration and Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and the ILO Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Additionally it is designed to assist the Balkan governments to implement their national plans of action to combat trafficking in persons, children especially, through prevention and education activities. The project envisages the active participation and partnership of national and local government institutions as well as of the targeted children and youth.

Young people raised in single-parent families or without parents, because one or both of them emigrated abroad, are dramatically exposed to the increasing risk of social deviation, irregular migration, trafficking and exploitation abroad. This phenomenon is

typically linked to the female emigration, as the highest percentage of migrants in these countries is represented by women.

Under a project *"Irregular migration and trafficking in unaccompanied minors"* IOM Rome is for the first time approaching the issue in a systematic and focused manner. Child trafficking is also related to the impact of migration on local communities and families in high-migration areas like Moldova and Romania. The aim is to provide social workers, and dedicated centres, through which the negative impact of migration can be mitigated.

Under the project *"Measures to support trans-national cooperation to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and irregular migration"* IOM Rome is supporting trans-national dialogue and cooperation among law enforcement, judiciary and NGOs in Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohja, Cyprus, Macedonia, Greece, Turkey and Ukraine. Using an approach flexible enough to meet local needs, the aims are to promote the human-rights as a means to counter trafficking and to achieve a common, clear understanding of trafficking in order not to confuse it with connected but distinct phenomena such as prostitution and irregular migration.

Besides building public conscience and capacity about trafficking in human beings, an IOM programme in Italy, aims at assisting victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. In 2006 the programme was extended to include humanitarian cases.

For victims of trafficking the assistance provided includes: voluntary return to the country of origin; airport assistance in both countries; medical, legal and psychological assistance; introduction in the labour market; vocational training, and financial support.

Fighting human trafficking in Turkey

Turkey is the most prosperous country bordering the Black Sea and an EU accession state. Economic growth is steady and attracts more foreign investment. Construction, tourism and business demand more labour – cheap labour. The lure of paid work pulls many groups of people from the former Soviet Union to Turkey, all believing that they will find a better life and a chance to get away from the poverty that has a stranglehold on many transition economies.

Labour migration programmes are few and far between. There may be legal labour migration alternatives for men in the construction sector, but the choices for women are fewer. Generally female migrants are referred to the domestic sector as nannies, taking care of elderly, or housekeepers. Sometimes they are waitresses. The domestic sector is unregulated, with low status and low wages, and carries a high risk for human trafficking.

Eager to earn a living and desperate for work to support their families, women and young girls from the former Soviet Union come to Turkey with high expectations, but are at risk of trafficking for sexual exploitation: 94 per cent of victims of trafficking from 2005 were sexually exploited. The trend continues in 2006 with all of the 60-plus victims so far contacted being sexually exploited. The Turkish Ministry of the Interior identified 246 people as having been trafficked to Turkey in 2005 (while an additional 223 were identified after they had returned home.

Turkey launched a comprehensive counter-trafficking programme in 2005 to provide assistance to trafficked persons and prosecute traffickers. Based on the three P's (prevention, protection, prosecution), Turkey has established the following:

- Two shelters for victims in Ankara and Istanbul where they receive medical, psychological and legal counselling;
- A phone helpline (40 per cent of rescues are coordinated through the helpline);
- Approximately 2000 law enforcement officers trained to improve identification of victims and prosecution of traffickers;
- New penal code introduced to increase sentences for traffickers;
- Regional (Moldova, Ukraine, Romania and Belarus) and national public information campaigns to increase awareness about human trafficking and to provide information about the helpline;
- For those not wishing to return home, a temporary residence permit is available for six months and can be extended a further six months.

Since 2005, when IOM's main programme started, close to 300 victims of trafficking have been assisted through IOM in Turkey

Exploring possibilities for legal labour migration specifically for women could be an important contribution towards offering an alternative channel for women to migrate, and thus reduce the pressure that leads vulnerable persons into the hands to traffickers.

Facilitating legal migration for work

Businesses want to recruit and move their personnel globally, and yet must work through often complicated and time-consuming governmental administrative structures to do so.

Many current structures are inadequate to the task of rapid recruitment and movement of workers and professionals. As a consequence, businesses and communities, but also groups in need of services (for example families and the hospitality industry) suffer. Indeed, while legal opportunities for migration for work are limited, demand for migrant workers is high and supply is even higher. How can we align these factors in safer, more flexible and more equitable ways? How can we ensure that it is not smuggling networks that do the matching?

The Spanish example

Spain is a country of 43.85 million in Southern Europe whose population is stable and would shrink without immigration. Spain has the highest unemployment rate in the EU and also the most rapid job growth, especially in the Madrid and Barcelona areas. Unemployment is over 30 per cent in some of Spain's 52 provinces, but residents there say they cannot afford to move to areas with jobs. Average unemployment in Spain is 9.07 per cent.

In spite of this, immigrants are arriving to fill jobs in Spain. Moroccans are 13.9 per cent of the 2 million foreigners in Spain, but Latin Americans (Ecuadorians, Colombians, and Argentineans) as well as Eastern Europeans (Romanians, Ukrainians, Poles, and Bulgarians) are Spain's fastest growing immigrant groups.

There are about 190,000 migrant farm workers in Spain. Many traditionally followed a route that took them to the vineyards of the Rioja region when fruit picking in Catalunia was completed, then to the orange orchards in Valencia, and finally to the horticultural centres of Almeria and Murcia.

In southern Spain, labour-intensive agriculture expanded significantly in the 1990s, and the seasonal work force employed in fruit and vegetable operations changed from Moroccans to Eastern Europeans and Latin Americans. This has led to tensions in some places, as jobless Moroccan men protest that employers prefer "fellow Catholics," often women from Eastern Europe.

As part of their bilateral dialogue, Morocco and Spain have agreed to co-operate not only on combating irregular flows (boat arrivals are down by 30 per cent in the Straits of Gibraltar, with Mauritanian involvement, but have grown dramatically in the Canary Islands) but on strengthening legal labour migration and integration of Moroccan migrants in Spain. Swifter visa delivery and more recruitment directly in Morocco are among the measures envisaged.

Spain already has some excellent examples of good practice, in particular in the area of circular migration. One is the rather unique circular migration project run by Unió de Pagesos in Catalunia that should be followed by other countries importing labour in the agricultural sector. This project also makes special provisions for female migrants' needs, such as housing and assistance through social workers, or by promoting the training and involvement of women in development projects in their home countries.

Recruiting seasonal workers from developing countries including Morocco and Colombia as well as from Romania), through Pagesos Solidaris,[1] a foundation that is part of that farmers' association, aims at: supplying their members with temporary labour; providing people from less privileged parts of the world with a chance to work in Spain while they gain experience that may help them start economic activities of their own in their home

[1] http://www.uniopagesos.es/organitzacio/fundacio_02.asp

communities. In fact, one of the most important fields of action, besides matching labour with jobs in an organized manner, consists in fostering the personal independence of the foreign seasonal workers by involving them in the local community and organizing events and training activities.

The workers spend between five and nine months in Catalunia. Many return from year to year. The project includes an accommodation plan, which currently manages more than fifty collective accommodations (subsidized by grants from the Catalunia government), and strives to reduce the impact and draw the maximum possible benefit from the rise in the immigrant population in Catalan towns.
In Colombia recruitment is done by Foundation correspondents, while in Romania selection is carried out in cooperation with the government. Recruitment from Morocco has dwindled since events in Madrid in March 2004. The programme also recruits migrant workers from various nationalities already present in Spain and aims for 2006 at extending recruitment to Bolivia and Moldavia.

The Foundation's project is in four phases:

- definition of Catalan farmers' labour needs;
- hiring management;
- reception programme; and
- development programme.

Agricultural unions from Majorca – Unió de Llauradors i Ramaders and Unió de Pagesos de Mallorca – and from Valencia have joined the initiative, which also promotes the twinning of the seasonal workers' home and host localities.

Some workers stay in Spain, while many return home to come back to Spain the following year. We will see more and more of this as transport, phone and the internet make contact between home and host societies easier.

Family reunification

For the relatively recent immigration area of Southern Europe, processes of migrant family formation and reunification are also new.

Even where national law foresees the possibility for legally established migrants to bring their family members to their country of residence, providing proof of relationship for family reunification purposes poses a serious challenge. This is the case in particular for migrants from countries where acceptable and reliable documents are difficult to procure.

Under a programme managed by IOM Rome in cooperation with the Italian government, migrants who have no other means to demonstrate a blood relationship can avail themselves on a strictly voluntary basis of *DNA testing* to demonstrate that the child they wish to bring to Italy under the family reunification category is actually their offspring.

As a side effect the use of the family reunification category to traffic children is also strongly discouraged.

The programme was started in 2001, initially for Somali refugees. Today the programme is active in 12 countries, and the Italian authorities have authorized its use for the entire consular network. By April 2006, 1988 cases have been handled, with the vast majority having ended with a positive outcome.

UNIFEM: A BRIEF ON EMPOWERING WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

S K Guha, Senior Programme Specialist
Asia Pacific Section
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Labour and other forms of migration can promote gender equality and women's empowerment by opening opportunities for women to achieve greater independence, self-confidence and status. Newly acquired skills of some migrant returnees and remittances and investments by migrants potentially contribute to poverty reduction. These aspects of migration have attracted growing interest among governments and development partners in relation to the Millennium Development Goals. Yet migration can lead to vulnerabilities, discrimination and abuse in ways that are specific to women throughout the migration process.

Women & labour migration: key facts

- The UN Population Division estimates that worldwide there were over 190 million persons residing outside their countries of origin in 2005.[1] In 2000, some 86 million migrants were migrant workers and their families.[2]
- The number of women migrating on their own as primary economic providers or heads of households has increased dramatically in recent years contributing to the feminisation of migration in many if not most regions. Globally, women constitute 50 per cent of the total international migrant population, but in sending countries, such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka, women accounted for 60 to 80 per cent of migrant workers abroad between 2000 and 2003.[3]
- While many women migrate for economic opportunities, other reasons may include family reunification or to escape gender discrimination, gender-specific cultural constraints or domestic violence. Women migrant workers typically migrate for periods of one to three years, often re-migrating multiple times, to work in the service and manufacturing sectors and in unskilled jobs. The heaviest concentration work as domestic workers and entertainers, areas that often are unregulated and do not fall under national labour laws. This lack of regulation leads to unacceptable working and living conditions; low wages; illegal withholding or garnishing of wages; and illegal and premature termination of employment. Such workers typically lack access to social services.
- Migrant women workers contribute to the economies of both sending and receiving countries through their labour and skills, remittances and productive investments upon

[1] United Nations (2006). *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision* (United Nations, POP/DB/MIG/REV.2005), data in digital form.
[2] International Labour Organisation. *Facts on Migrant Labour*.
[3] International Organization for Migration (2005). *World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits*.

their return home. Remittances are the second-largest capital flow to developing countries, with formal transfers nearly triple the value of official development assistance[4] and accounting for as much as 10 per cent of GDP in some countries.[5] Some studies indicate that women tend to prioritise remittances for family needs, such as food, clothing, housing, education and health, while men use a portion for savings and investment in addition to family needs.[6]

- Women, especially unskilled workers who make up the majority of women migrant workers, are subject to human rights violations and discrimination at the hands of brokers, recruiters, employers, and sometimes migration officials. They find themselves vulnerable as female, as foreigners and as unskilled labourers, exposing them to abuse and exploitation on multiple fronts, including physical and social isolation, sexual harassment, and sexual and physical violence. In extreme cases, what started out as legal migration can end in trafficking.
- Such abuses jeopardize women's safety, dignity, well-being and overall empowerment. They also entail developmental costs in terms of services required and in reduced productivity and absenteeism resulting from psychological and physical stress.

Priorities for empowering women migrant workers

Drawing upon international human rights standards, UNIFEM promotes efforts to facilitate safe migration for women, reduce trafficking in women and children, and ensure that migration is an empowering experience. Working in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Jordan, Laos, Nepal, the Philippines, and Thailand (with Hong Kong and Sri Lanka as learning and resource countries), UNIFEM promotes enabling policy, institutional and socio-economic environments that ensure women equality of opportunity, and access to resources and benefits, throughout the migration process. Based upon this work, UNIFEM has prioritised several areas for policy action involving governments, the private sector and civil society.

Legal and policy reform. Standards for protecting women migrant workers' rights are found in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and General Assembly Resolution 58/143 on Violence against Women Migrant Workers, among others. Such international agreements can call attention to discriminatory national laws and policies. For example, evidence has shown that bans and restrictions on women's migration serve only to make women more vulnerable through irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking. Such provisions contravene Article 15 of CEDAW on equality before the law and Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Regulatory mechanisms for recruitment

[4] Global Commission on International Migration (2005). *Migration in an Interconnected World: New Directions for Action.*
[5] United Nations Development Programme (2005). *The Potential Role of Remittances in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals – An Exploration.* Background Note, Roundtable on Remittances and the MDGs, 17 September 2005.
[6] Ibid.

agencies, together with incentives for migrant workers to use legal channels of migration, can help protect women migrants' rights and reduce trafficking. Regulations should stipulate the responsibilities of recruitment agencies throughout the migration process and fees charged to workers, and redress mechanisms for workers in cases of violations by agents or employers.

Many countries have adopted laws and policies to safeguard migrant workers' rights. In 2003, the Jordanian Ministry of Labour endorsed a standard working contract for non-Jordanian domestic workers defining rights and responsibilities for workers and employers. Hong Kong SAR officially recognizes migrants' unions, including unions of women domestic workers, and protects the rights of union members. Thailand has instituted bilateral agreements with Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar to introduce procedures for employment and return of workers and to apply national labour laws to protect migrant workers' rights.

Multisectoral training and services. Gender-responsive training should be in place to help potential migrants navigate the migration process with information on risks and their rights at home and abroad; legal channels of migration; what to ask of recruiters, and sources of assistance at each stage. Government and non-governmental organizations should be equipped to provide socio-economic, legal and counselling services in transit and destination countries, while police, lawyers and judges should be trained to handle rights violations in a gender-sensitive way.

Return and reintegration. Governments should work with private sector and civil society organizations to establish reintegration programmes that combine economic, psycho-social, and legal services including access to bank accounts and credit, counselling for survivors of violence and sexual exploitation, and skills training for those who were domestic or sex workers. Family and community counselling is important not only to prevent stigma and alienation experienced by some returning women, but also to assist in helping them readjust.

Advocacy. Both the general public and policymakers should be informed of the potential exploitation and human rights violations women migrants face and know their contributions to development to generate support for laws that safeguard their rights.

Data and research. There is a lack of comprehensive and timely data on the number of women migrants and on the violence and discrimination they suffer. Such information can facilitate the formulation of appropriate policies and provide hard data to advocate for women migrant workers' rights. Better understanding is needed of the characteristics of women's migration for work and their economic and social contributions to both sending and receiving countries, including the scale, use and impact of remittances, and savings and expenditures patterns of women migrants.

We commit to support, cooperate and give assistance to any or all efforts… against illegal recruitment, human trafficking, or… any policy that will … violate the human rights of migrant workers, particularly women migrant workers.

Overseas employment service providers and their national associations shall protect women migrant workers by sharing information, lessons learned… and help monitor, investigate, facilitate and resolve cases arising from foreign employment.

– Excerpts from the Covenant of Ethical Conduct and Good Practices of Overseas Employment Services Providers, adopted 15 November 2005, UNIFEM Regional Consultation on Good Practices to Protect Women Migrant Workers.

ANNEX

List of Participants

1. Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General, IOM
2. Dr. Hedia Belhadj, Deputy Director, Technical Support Division, UNFPA
3. Mr. Francois Farah, Chief, Population and Development Branch, UNFPA
4. Ms. Aminata Toure, Officer-in-Charge, Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch, UNFPA
5. Ms. Monica Boyd, Canada Research Chair and Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto
6. Mr. Carunia Mulya Firdausy, Deputy State Minister for Societal Dynamics, Ministry of Research and Technology, Indonesia
7. Ms. Elizabeth Adjei, Director, Ghana Immigration Service, Ministry of Interior
8. Ms. Charito Basa, Filipino Women's Council
9. Ms. Denise Paiewonsky, INSTRAW
10. Ms. Gloria Moreno-Fontes Chammartin, International Migration Programme, ILO
11. Ms. Jillyanne Redpath, Senior Legal Officer, IOM
12. Dr. Manuel Carballo, Executive Director, International Centre for Migration and Health
13. Ms. Ana Revenco, President, La Strada
14. Mr. Fred O. Oladeinde, President, Foundation for Democracy in Africa
15. Ms. Hania Zlotnik, Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Organization
16. Mr. Peter Schatzer, Director, Regional Office for the Mediterranean, IOM Rome
17. Mr. Luis Mora, Specialist in Gender and Masculinities, Country Support Team for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNFPA
18. Ms. Aicha Belarbi, Co-Chair, Global Commission on International Migration
19. Mr. Philippe Fargues, Director, Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research in International Migration, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute
20. Mr. Graeme Hugo, Director of GISCA and Professor of Geography, Geographical and Environmental Studies, University of Adelaide
21. Ms. Susan Forbes Martin, Executive Director, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University
22. Ms. Litha Musyimi-Ogana, Gender and Civil Society Adviser, NEPAD Secretariat
23. Mr. SK Guha, Senior Programme Specialist, Asia Pacific Section, UNIFEM
24. Mr. Peer Sieben, Representative, UNFPA Romania
25. Ms. Dinys Luciano, Gender, Ethnicity and Health Unit, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
26. Ms. Andrea Volfova, Associate Social Affairs Officer/Migration Focal Point, United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
27. Ms. Rachel N. Mayanja, Assistant-Secretary General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)

28. Mr. Bela Hovy, Chief, Migration Section, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
29. Ms. Katarina Salmela, OSAGI
30. Ms. Rhea Saab, Economic and Social Policies Unit, Global Policy Section, Division of Policy and Planning, UNICEF
31. Mr. Juan Carlos Guzman, Gender and Development Unit, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, World Bank
32. Ms. Ann Pawliczko, Technical Specialist, Population and Development Branch, UNFPA
33. Ms. Nami Takashi, Programme Specialist, Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch, UNFPA
34. Ms. Luz Melo, Human Rights Adviser, Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch, UNFPA
35. Ms. Anjali Kaur, Consultant, Culture, Gender and Human Rights Branch, UNFPA
36. Ms. Neela Jayaratnam, Senior Programme Adviser, Asia Pacific Division, UNFPA
37. Ms. Sherin Saadallah, Programme Specialist for Arab States, UNFPA
38. Ms. Janet Jensen, Media Services Branch, UNFPA
39. Ms. Sonia Martinelli-Heckadon, Programme Specialist, Latin America and Caribbean Division, UNFPA
40. Ms. Manuelita Escobar, Assistant Representative, UNFPA Paraguay
41. Mr. Luca Dall'Oglio, UN Permanent Observer, IOM
42. Ms. Anke Strauss, UN Permanent Observer, Liaison Officer, IOM
43. Ms. Amy Muedin, UN Permanent Observer, Programme Specialist, IOM
44. Ms. Kristina Touzenis, Adviser, IOM Rome

United Nations Population Fund
220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017
www.unfpa.org

IOM International Organization for Migration

International Organization for Migration
17, Route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 19 Switzerland
Tel: +41.22.717 9111 • Fax: +41.22.798 6150

122 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10168-1610
www.iom.int

ISBN 0-89714-303-7
E/2000/2006